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*Report on*

# KORAPUT GRAMDANS

*A. W. Sahasrabudhe*

1956-1959

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## INTRODUCTION

Koraput has been in the news for the last three to four years. A great deal has been written for and against the experiment we have undertaken there. The development work in the villages inhabited by the Adivasis is an arduous task. It is something of a social adventure. If the impact of the Bhoodan movement and Shri Vinobaji's walking tour was not behind us, we would have shuddered to undertake such a stupendous task. An authoritative report on the work we have been doing for the last four years, has been overdue. I am conscious that there has been regrettable delay in publishing our own assessment of the experiment. The experiment is being carried on and a report on the work done there would be valuable even now. In the subsequent pages I have tried to present facts about the development work in the Gramdan villages in Koraput.

A social experiment like the one we have undertaken in Koraput cannot be brought under a few neat headings or simplified too easily. It is not possible to pass a judgement on any one aspect of the multitudinous tasks we had undertaken. The work was conceived and executed on the background of a unified idea. It was like planting a seed which had to create its own ferment in the soil, and develop on its own.

The enthusiasm the Adivasis showed and the faith they evinced for the idea of Gramdan, was a discovery; and remains the bright spot of the experiment. In spite of the initial difficulties and obstacles, the Adivasis have stood by Gramdan and bear witness to the fact that they had voluntarily opted for the idea.

After a prolonged spell of inactivity, a statutory body called the Orissa Bhoodan Yagna Samiti, constituted under the Orissa Bhoodan Yagna Act 1953-56, has started functioning, and the redistributed land is being legally recognized. So far they have completed their verification of nearly 4,000 acres, spread over in 9 villages. The work will now, it is hoped, proceed speedily, and it will not be difficult any more to have a correct assessment of the exact number of villages that have declared Gramdan. But for the unfaltering faith of the Adivasis, Gramdan would not have become a legal fact. It has been a privilege to work with these sturdy sons of the soil in Orissa, and have a glimpse into the simple magnanimity of their hearts.

The Sarva Seva Sangh which had started this great experiment, decided to withdraw gradually and let the local agencies carry on the work on their own responsibility. The decision was taken in December, 1958. The withdrawal does not certainly mean that they have abandoned the task. Even today there are nearly twenty constructive workers of the Sarva Seva Sangh in the field. They have worked with us as comrades

for the last four years. They have a missionary zeal and have not been cowed down by the innumerable hurdles they had to cross. Actually it was on their strength that the Sarva Seva Sangh decided to withdraw. I feel confident that these workers will carry on the experiment with unwavering devotion. I must pay my tribute to my brave comrades whose co-operation has been invaluable.

The task of developing nearly 800 small, scattered hamlets of the Adivasis was beyond the capacity of a body like A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh. We could undertake such a stupendous task only because of the help we received from organizations like the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, and the Khadi and Village Industries commission. The State and the Union Government also extended their hand of sympathy and help. I must confess, however, that being unaccustomed to work according to the departmental schedules of the Government, there was some delay in adjusting ourselves to the methods followed by the administration. We have, however, followed a system of auditing the accounts through a reputed firm of Chartered Accountants year after year. We submit this statement and seek utilization certificates from District Magistrates. In this respect I must acknowledge my gratitude to District Officers in Koraput for the co-operation they extended to us in regularising the records.

There have been inevitable ups and downs in the progress of the work. Some friction between the agencies was also unavoidable. But I am glad to say that after all the State Government of Orissa have taken a sympathetic attitude during last year and a half towards our work. They have recently approved a 'Pilot Research Project' in Boipariguda (Koraput) which has just started functioning. This would be a new approach to co-operation.

It must be emphasized that it would be idle to expect spectacular results even in this project. It is primarily a task of rehabilitation and education. A couple of decades of continuous effort would be necessary before any results can be seen.

I have tried to give a brief summary of the work we had undertaken and the way we faced the various problems that came before us. The effort has been its own reward. For me, the fact that a body of Gandhian workers with the inspiration and guidance of Vinobaji, took up the task of helping the Adivasis in Koraput to rehabilitate themselves, and took up the work of economic development and of shaping their collective strength, has been a symbol of the vitality and capacity of our people. I ask for no other sign of success. Reward of service is greater opportunity to serve. Koraput is a challenge. It is a call to social endeavour.

15th March, 1960

*A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh*

## CONTENTS

## PART I

Rural Development Experiment in Koraput—A General Statement 1

## PART II

Chap.		Page
I	Programme and Finances	33
II	Workers in the Project	37
III	Training Programme	41
IV	Nature of Distribution of Gramdan Lands	46
V	Land Distribution — Its Effect on Size of Holding	53
VI	Families & Holdings as affected by Gramdan Land Distribution	56
VII	What happened to Distributed Land	58
VIII	Development Work and Gramsabhas	67
IX	Development of Co-operative Organization	83
X	Village and Cottage Industries	100
XI	Special Programmes	105
XII	Research and Special Studies	109
	Appendix	113

***REPORT ON KORAPUT GRAMDANS***

***PART I***

***RURAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIMENT IN KORAPUT***

# RURAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIMENT IN KORAPUT

## A GENERAL STATEMENT

### 1. THE EARLY BEGINNINGS :

#### *Shri Vinobaji in Koraput:*

Shri Vinobaji spent twenty-five days in West Bengal touring two districts bordering on Bihar and Orissa. When he reached Lakhanganath, his first halt in Orissa, late Shri Gopabandhu Chaudhari, the veteran leader of Orissa and the moving spirit of constructive work in the State, met and presented him a lakh and twenty-two thousand acres of land offered by forty thousand donors; and ninety-three villages as Gramdan. The first Gramdan in U.P. (Mangaroth) was regarded as an exception but the second, Manpur (Orissa) and the many that followed set people thinking about this new phenomenon. On his arrival Vinobaji was offered no less than one hundred Gramdan villages in Koraput. By then the total number of Gramdan villages in Orissa had reached 230. Originally Vinobaji was to spend only a month and half in Koraput, but the response of the people was so encouraging that he agreed to stay on for a few weeks more. It was the devotion and the one-pointed effort of the local workers like Shri Vishwanath Patanaik and his group and the inspiring presence of Vinobaji that brought about this miracle. On October 1, 1955, when he left Koraput, the number of Gramdan villages had crossed the figure of 600. Nearly 165,268 acres of land were donated in the districts of Koraput alone.

#### *Responsibility for the follow-up:*

This created a new challenge to the Bhoodan workers. During the first three years of the movement land was given in Bhoodan by the people of the various states. The distribution of the land to the landless was also taken in hand slowly. Distributing land appeared to be simple proposition in the beginning. But, now, after eight years of the movement, a realization has come that the gravity and the immensity of the task of distribution were not understood by us in the early stages. Gramdans in such large numbers posed a problem which could not be evaded. The momentum and the logic of the movement itself compelled us to face the problem of Development of these Gramdan villages. Here we felt was the opportunity to work out the Sarvodaya plan of integrated development and create a pattern of Gram swaraj. The Serva Seva Sangh accepted the challenge and decided to take up the development work in the Gramdan villages in co-operation with Utkal-Nav-Jeevan-Mandal, in spite of its meagre resources in men and money.

Development work in Gramdan villages needed a large band of trained workers. We thought we would earmark the amount received

in Sampattidan for training and maintenance of these workers. The Commissioner for Tribal Welfare, Government of India, happened to visit Koraput while Vinobaji was there. His Department sanctioned a sum of Rupees two lakh for soil conservation, small irrigation projects and bullock distribution for the Adivasis. The Government of Orissa, also, was considering a scheme of giving some help to the Gramdan villages.

About two hundred workers had devoted themselves to Bhoojan and were working in different parts of the district while Vinobaji was there. Nearly fifty of them decided to devote themselves, mainly to the reconstruction of the Gramdan villages. The late Shri Gopbandhu Choudhari and his respected wife Smt. Ramadevi, were prominent amongst them. Both of them were working in the district upto the middle of 1956. They were trekking continuously from village to village. As a result the number of villages given in Gramdan kept on increasing. Side by side land was being redistributed. Title deeds were prepared for the new donees. By the end of May 1956, redistribution of land had taken place in nearly 400 villages and about 600 pairs of bullocks were distributed to cultivators in 200 villages. The total number of Gramdan villages in Koraput, by then was in the neighbourhood of 800.

#### *Redistribution of donated land:*

When the rains set in walking tours had to be discontinued. The time was utilised for getting the names of new donees entered into village registers. All this work was proceeding apace satisfactorily. The only question, disturbing us was the problem of bringing about a near per capita equality in the holdings thus redistributed. Vinobaji had insisted that the total land of a village should be surveyed and classified and some land of good quality should pass on to every family. He had asked the workers to explain to the villagers the idea of "equality of holding" and leave it to them to put it in practice. The initiative and responsibility was to be left entirely on the villagers themselves. The workers were only to give guidance.

Special care was taken to emphasize the fact that the distribution effected in the first instance was only a first step; and that they would have to redistribute land among themselves still further, until some kind of equality was attained. In redistributing land in the 400 villages the main concern of the Bhoojan workers was to see that no one remained landless; and that every holder received at least a small portion of Paddy land. Villagers accepted this willingly. But they did not show a similar readiness for the second phase of redistribution. The first distribution often resulted in leaving the proportion of smallest to the largest holding to 1:5 and in some cases even more. Bhoojan workers did not bring any pressure on them to speed up redistribution. They were hoping that the process will gain momentum gradually.

*Bullock distribution:*

In distributing pairs of bullocks no hard and fast rule was observed. Actually the Gramsabha was asked to prepare a census of the animal power in the village and to find out how many more animals they needed for the proper cultivation of land. The idea was to donate bullocks to Gramsabha and not to any individuals. The Gramsabha was to distribute them to individual holders according to their needs. A pair of bullocks costs about 100-125 rupees. About 2,000 bullocks are imported in Koraput every year. The animals are not however fed adequately and cannot work more than 3 to 4 hours a day. Like peasants in other parts of the country the adivasi does not keep a stock of fodder or hay which would last for whole year and out of which a regular feed would be guaranteed year round. Life span of a bullock, here, is as short as 4 to 5 years. No wonder bullocks are constantly in demand in big numbers.

The workers were mostly inexperienced. They could not calculate the work that a pair of bullocks could do in a month. They had not calculated the actual felt need for bullocks in any particular village. They had a feeling that bullocks would be necessary to those whom land was given. They had no plan to go upon. As such some pairs were distributed individually as well; and in some cases the needy escaped attention.

*Hazards of early Blue-Prints:*

I had precious little knowledge of the actual conditions in Koraput district when I took up work in November 1955. I had no blue print or a plan of the nature of the development work that we were to undertake here. I had not even smattering knowledge of the Oriya language. None of our workers knew any of the dialects of adivasis. So in the early months I went round the villages and collected basic information with the help of interpreters. I was making a special survey of work of re-distribution of land and the attitude of the people of villages to the whole question of land. I pondered deeply on the various problems that confronted workers and the villagers.

It was sometime early in 1956 that we prepared something like a tentative plan for the development work after a great deal of discussion among ourselves, and submitted it to the Central Government. Obviously our knowledge of facts was inadequate. We had not the competence nor the knowledge of conditions prevailing to prepare a scientific plan for the area. The Union Government was, however, eager to include a scheme in the Second Five-Year Plan, and it was necessary that they should be posted with the special and urgent needs of Gramdan villages. A rough outline of the immediate needs for developing Gramdan villages was, prepared. It was envisaged that roughly a crore of rupees would be needed over a five year period for development of Gramdan villages in Orissa. It was expected that the Central Government would contribute 75 lakh rupees and Khadi Commission would be able to provide another

10 lakhs. The Sarva Seva Sangh would contribute 10 lakhs which would be utilised, mainly, for the maintenance of the workers. The funds received from Khadi Commission would obviously be earmarked for village industries. Soil conservation, irrigation projects, buildings, warehouses and schools, provision of medical aid and such other schemes would be executed with the help of the Central Government finance.

*Credit—the Pressing Problem:*

The immediate and the most pressing problem that confronted the follow-up was of finding credit for the cultivators. For, Gramdan had immediately brought their credit-worthiness to a zero. The local money-lenders refused to advance even a rupee to them. The revenue authorities likewise closed their doors against the cultivators who had relinquished individual ownership in land. The condition of the peasants was critical and some alternate arrangements were called for. It was, therefore, decided to start a Credit Co-operative Society in every village or a group of villages and to build up a network of co-operative activities throughout the district. A Credit Co-operative Society for every two or three hundreds of adivasi families was, suggested and it was further decided to link them together into a District Gramdan Co-operative Credit Union. These village Co-operatives would buy a share of Rs. 100/- each and become the member of District Co-operative Union. It was decided to collect a sum of Rupees 5 lakh by way of Sampattidan to enable these village co-operatives to buy a share of District Co-operative Union as by themselves they were unable to bear the burden. It was expected that help upto Rs. 25 lakhs would be forthcoming from the State Co-operative Bank. This plan of rural credit was submitted to the State Government in November 1956.

*Training of Local Craftsmen:*

The social conditions in Koraput were peculiar in many ways. One would hardly find a craftsman of any sort in the area. It was difficult to find a qualified carpenter, smith, mason or a foreman in the district. 84% population of the district consisted of adivasis. They were not advanced enough to have any craftsman in their rank. The only weapon they possessed was axe with the help of which they cut down trees in the forest. They did not need any mason or carpenter. Their footwear was more than often made of wooden planks. They prepared it with their own hands. To speed up the development programme, craftsmen were needed. Dependence on outsiders would have affected the pace of the programme. Ultimately the local people had to be trained and the responsibility of work had to be passed on to them within a short period.

The services of a qualified executive engineer were secured on loan for two years through the good offices of the Government of India. He was full of hope and faith in the work. After a preliminary study,

he undertook a tour of Hyderabad, Poona, Gujarat and Bombay. He visited the engineering colleges in these places and appealed to the young students to donate their time for the revolutionary work that was being done in Koraput. About 20 students responded to his appeal and came to Koraput with the desire to devote their vacation to development work in Koraput. They prepared a scheme of minor irrigation works for 10 to 15 places and surveyed some three thousand acres of land for bunding purposes. Two of these young engineers joined our team afterwards. We, thus, had the assistance of three qualified engineers. Shri Datye who was Executive Engineer, started a Training Centre for Engineering Overseers and Agricultural Assistants by the middle of 1956.

#### *Training of Village Leaders:*

Side by side efforts were made to train local village leadership. Short duration camps were planned wherein Literacy,—letter writing, dealings with post office, elementary book-keeping, general information on Co-operative organization, Panchayat administration, agricultural development, Forest administration, and such other relevant topics were taught. A general knowledge of the principles behind Gramdan movement was explained. Such camps of two to three months' duration proved quite useful.

Training camps needed funds. For the training camp at Gopalvadi we had sixty-five candidates. Our expenditure on food per head came to twenty rupees; and five rupees per head for other expenses. The total expense could be met out of a specified grant from the Central Government. But ultimately we had to devise some method by which the training camps could be made to pay their way. An attempt was made in Garanada in '56 to find the necessary money, partially at least, out of work programmes undertaken as part of training camp.

## **2. OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAMME:**

In Koraput an average village consists of 20 to 25 families. It was thought wise to bring about 10 to 12 villages under one 'Centre' for forming one Gramsabha or 'Village Council' for every 250 to 300 families. This was to function as Co-operative Credit Society in addition. From such 'Village Centres' Village Credit Societies started advancing loans to local people. The Central Co-operative Organization (Marketing Section of the Sangh) built some warehouses for storing grains. By June 1957 there were something like 56 centres on these lines operating in the area. Sarva Seva Sangh, alone, advanced nearly two lakhs of rupees to about 7,000 families for production and consumption purposes during the sowing season. The Gandhi Smarak Nidhi advanced two lakhs of rupees as Foundation Fund for this *ad hoc* Union. The A. I. Khadi Commission

advanced a loan amount of nearly three lakhs of rupees under their scheme of hand-pounding of paddy. It was hoped that the Gramsabha would get some form of legal recognition. Similarly the Central District Co-operative Credit Union would receive requisite legal sanction, and the initiative for the development of the region would pass on to this network of co-operatives in course of time.

*Demonstration Units:*

Along with these activities of Credit, a scheme of developing some areas as demonstration units was undertaken. These units were expected to undertake comprehensive development activities. Bunding, construction of small irrigation dams, compost pits, distribution of better seeds and manure, village leaders' training camps, starting primary schools and holding regular meetings of Gramsabha were the main items on the programme of intensive development for everyone of the units. Along with these activities about 10 acres of land as a demonstration farm was to be developed with the voluntary labour of the village population. It was expected that the message of Bhoojan and Gramdan would spread to rest of the villages while carrying on this development work effectively. It was, also, presumed that these Demonstration Units would turn out to be good training grounds for the Adivasi people. Promising young men from the surrounding villages were to be absorbed here as apprentices.

*Village and Cottage Industries:*

We had opened a workshop at Raygada out of the grant received from the Khadi Commission. The idea was to prepare Kisan Charkas, boxes for bee-hives and other small implements. Ultimately, it was hoped, that this workshop would develop into a small factory for agricultural implements. The workshop had begun to produce ordinary spinning wheels by June 1957. We had distributed 800 spinning wheels at various centres by then. It was our desire to arouse interest in spinning, specially of the women folk. Nearly 45 lady workers, mostly from the Anugul basic centre, were taken up for popularizing the spinning wheel among the women of the villages. There was no intention of producing Khadi for market. But soon it was realised that sedentary occupations like spinning had no attraction for the adivasis. They considered sitting at one place quite boring.

*Forest Industries:*

There is jungle in seven out of every ten acres of land in Koraput. The Government get an income of nearly 20 lakhs out of the wealth of the forest. Fine quality teak-wood is exported from the district. Valuable herbs and minerals are collected and sold by the local people every year. Nearly three to four hundred contractors are engaged in exploiting the Forest Wealth. They carry on trade worth lakhs of rupees every year. Nearly one half of the per capita income of the adivasi population

today is derived from the products from Jungle. Broadly speaking in the Division of Raygada agriculture is a minor occupation as compared to exploitation of forest wealth. The village industries patronized by the Khadi Commission could not thrive in this area. It was necessary to take up occupations related to the exploitation of the forest wealth. We thought it wise to start a Jungle Co-operative Society for an area covered by the Grampanchayat. Such societies would take up the work of felling down the trees in place of private contractors. The Central Co-operative Organization should in that case, undertake marketing.

*Surface mining :*

Next to its thick jungles, was the rich mineral wealth. In the sub-division of Nowrangpur one comes across Iron Smelting Kilns where iron is smelted in crude fashion. Some villages specialise in smelting iron. It was necessary to improve the technique of some of these country crafts in vogue for generations, before introducing new crafts to them. It is ominous that one mining syndicate has already been floated in Raygada. Koraput is supposed to hold good manganese. Over three thousand labourers are engaged at present in mining. A systematic plan of decentralized mining was necessary. Realising the importance of a scheme of decentralized mining a programme of studies and investigations was included in the programme of village industries.

After doing this kind of preliminary work for about 18 months we had acquired some insight and had a better appreciation of the nature of development work in backward and primitive area like Koraput. Some of our bookish ideas were found unworkable. We had to improvise new methods of development. For instance, we had budgeted a sum of Rs. 30 lakhs for the scheme of minor irrigation works. After some experience we realized that soil conservation should have first priority. The topography of the district of Koraput is peculiar in many ways. Out of its total area of nearly 10,000 sq. miles, about 2500 sq. miles are at a height of 500' to 1000' above sea level; another 2000 sq. miles are situated at three thousand feet, and the remaining at 3000'. The climate, soil and geographic conditions in everyone of these regions is different. Crops and agricultural possibilities are also peculiar to each area. Instead of growing the traditional variety of Vari and Nachni or low variety of paddy, it would be advantageous to bund the slopes which are above 3000' height and grow orchards. The region would be suitable for growing coffee. When we studied the geographic and soil condition of the area we came to the conclusion that the plan we had prepared would have to be altered materially. Instead of making a plan for every separate village we saw that it was necessary to make a plan for the region. The district would have to be the unit of the new plan. By June 1957 discrepancy between geographic facts and our conception of village development had become obvious to us.

### 3. HURDLES IN THE WAY

#### *Friction amongst workers:*

Our ideas were becoming clearer and we had by now fairer grasp of the local situation. Nearly two hundred workers were working actively in the district. They were fired with the idea of bringing the entire village population of the district to accept Gramdan. The development activities, also, were being pursued with great enthusiasm. There was, however, noticeable friction and discord amongst the different sets of workers who had taken up the development work in Koraput with a missionary zeal. Broadly the workers were divided into two categories. The first group was of those who were on the move and who were carrying the message of Gramdan from village to village and who were also doing redistribution of land and preparing proper title deeds for new donees. Their efforts were producing results. The number of Gramdan villages had gone up from 609 to 1496. The second group of workers consisted mainly of those who had so to say tied themselves up in a village or small area round about, and who were actually guiding the villagers in the day to day activity for development. The propagandist of the Gramdan ideas looked upon the development work as a relief measure. They did not attach any revolutionary significance to such work. They began to feel that pre-occupation with development work would hamper the revolutionary process of Gramdan. They felt that the target of getting the whole district in Gramdan would not be possible if the workers allowed themselves to be caught up in the tedious and slow work of economic development. The success in getting Gramdans had imperceptibly gone to the head and created an arrogant mentality and self-complacency among the propagandist group. The attitude of the group that was engaged in constructive activities was the opposite of this. Immediate results were not forthcoming. The vast mass of the local population had not shaken off its traditional apathy and indifference. People's participation was a nice idea but it could not be evoked easily. There was obviously some disappointment; and a shade of pessimism had begun to cloud the virgin enthusiasm. The constructive workers were anxious to develop at least a few centres speedily so that they could provide a referent of the Gramdan idea. They wanted to build up an area where the sense of ownership in land will have been cast aside, where co-operation will have entered every field of collective activity, where the bonds of money lenders and traders will have been cut asunder, where the total man-power of the village would have been mobilised for development work. In short they wanted to build up a new social order of the free and equal.

Men in both the groups were sincere and earnest, and were anxious to work out their ideas. Together they represented the New Ideal. Their work was complementary. But in their zeal and impatience to produce

results they did not realize that they were two wings of one ideal. And some tension grew between them.

*Attitude of State Government:*

Unexpectedly the Government of Orissa changed their attitude to activities like Bhoodan and Gramdan. From June to December 1957, we had to face a new situation. We had to make special efforts to remove unwarranted suspicions of the Government officials and try to get their co-operation in our development work.

The economic development we had planned depended on the co-operative structure which we had visualised to build up. A co-operative structure could come into existence without much difficulty, if the Government adopted a helpful attitude. Our plan of Primary Units consisting of 200 or 300 families and a Central District Co-operative Credit Union to link up these units, was before the State Government from November 1956. A representative of the Reserve Bank of India, visited Koraput in 1957 in order to examine the plan we had submitted. The State Government, however, did not approve of our plan. The Government had a different plan of their own. They wanted to have one 'Grain Gola Society' for every 5 to 7 thousand village population. Instead of according a special treatment, the Government wanted people in Gramdan villages to join grain gola society in their area as others did. The Sarva Seva Sangh on the other hand wanted the Gramsabha in every area to be in the Centre of the picture. But this was just a beginning of the wide gulf that was to separate the two.

From June 1957, we had to face for the first time open opposition from Government. It was obvious from their actions that they had decided to put every possible impediment to the growth of our movement. Government officials and their henchmen started encouraging donors of land to take back their gifts and withdraw from the Gramdan community. Applications began to be sent to Revenue offices stating that the applicant did not intend to give his land in Gramdan and did not want the land to be transferred to common ownership. Few hundred of such applications were considered by revenue authorities. In some places Bhoodan workers were summoned to give evidence. Criminal cases were launched. It began to be whispered that most of the Gramdans were bogus. They said signatures were obtained by dangling false promises to the poor, ignorant people. There was no doubt that an all out offensive was set in action against the movement.

*Bhoodan Act :*

The Government enacted a Bhoodan act in 1954. In December 1956, they amended it. A Bhoodan Samiti was brought into existence by the Government. According to new Act all land obtained in Bhoodan or Gramdan was invested in the first instance in the Samiti. The Samiti

had to redistribute the land. But it was made impossible for the Samiti to function in the normal course. For over two years and half no money was allocated for its day to day expenses. Not an acre of land which was redistributed by us during the last three years had been properly and legally registered. There was no title deed in the hands of any of the donees. But in spite of this organized, systematic opposition on the part of the Government, the land that was distributed to landless in 750 villages remains in their hands to-day. This speaks of the high integrity and honestly of the poor Adivasi.

#### *Problems of Agricultural credit :*

We had hoped that the newly founded Grain Gola Societies would be able to supply credit, partially at least, to the Adivasis. But we saw that they were unable to supply the urgent need of the poor cultivator. It was thought that the formation of Agricultural Co-operative Societies would facilitate operation of credit. But the Government of Orissa have not yet prepared the bye-laws for such Societies. Agricultural Co-operative Societies have been formed in the States of Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Bombay and Tamilnad. All the adult inhabitants of a gramdan village become members of such Society. The District Co-operative Bank gives advances to these village co-operatives for giving seasonal short term loans to the agriculturists. We were hoping that the Government of Orissa will enact similar rules and bye-laws and enable the agricultural co-operatives in Koraput to function properly; unless this was done development work would have to mark time. No further progress was possible unless and until credit facilities were made available to the cultivator.

The vast mass of people in Koraput belong to what we may call the lowest strata of society. They are a typical specimen of the most exploited humanity. They are illiterate and have very little knowledge of the large world outside. They have experienced ruthless exploitation at the hands of the money-lender, trader and the white collared town's man. They are naturally distrustful and afraid of everyone from the town with whom they have to deal. We have to come to a definite conclusion that it is idle to talk of selfhelp to such a depressed section of humanity in the initial stages at least. The initiative and responsibilities for development work in such a backward area must be taken up by the Government. The various problems we faced while carrying on development work in this area will have to be answered by the State Government if and when they undertake this work.

#### *Outdated Policies:*

For instance they have three jungle co-operative societies in Koraput district. Roughly, there is one society for one sub-division, that is for an area of three thousand square miles. It comprises of nearly fifteen hundred villages. The State Government must change their policy, and form

small compact co-operatives. A co-operative should cover a maximum area of twenty to twenty-five sq. miles. There should be about three or four hundred such compact societies. The Forest wealth of the District should be exploited through them. Our development programme of gramdan villages will immediately show a new vigour and enthusiasm, when this happens.

The Adivasi is looked upon as enemy number one by the officers of the Reserved Forest. He cuts down the trees in the forest for fuel as well as for creating agricultural land. An undeclared war is constantly going on between the local inhabitants and the men of the Forest Department. This must stop. The local population must be made co-sharers and co-builders of the forest. Jungle wealth must be developed with the active help of the local population. Experiments on this line could be started to begin with in the gramdan villages. But the Government does not seem to have realised the urgent need for change and reorientation of forest rules and regulations.

It is equally necessary to introduce new modes of cultivation in areas which are on a high altitude. Here horticulture must find place instead of the cultivation of the traditional paddy and other grains as at present. But here again innovation is possible if there is capital to be invested in land. Experiments could be started in selected areas. The same is true in regard to surface mining. A concerted drive to achieve these ends through the co-operatives must be launched. Development work in a gramdan village can stand on its own legs and make satisfactory progress when the basic problems of development policies as mentioned above have been tackled properly; and when the village has been linked up as a unit in the total development of the region.

The population in Koraput is scattered on a large area. A village in Koraput is more a hamlet than a village. One comes across small hamlets with just two or three families. In areas with thick jungles the population is even more thinly scattered. Wild animals kill scores of Adivasis every year. Herds of elephants roam about and devastate standing crops. In many places lonely hamlets must be consolidated together in a fair sized village. A body like Sarva Seva Sangh can do educative work on these lines. They can go to the people and persuade them to co-operate in such a scheme of consolidation. They can create a public opinion and the climate required for co-operative development of the whole region.

#### *Lack of effective co-ordination:*

I must confess that we have been found wanting. We have not been able to impress upon the Government the urgency and immediacy of adopting a new policy. We were fortunate in getting the services of experts from outside. But we could not utilise their services fully. And

to-day instead of expanding our activities we have to systematically withdraw from the field, step by step since June 1958 onwards.

In October 1957 a conference of the leaders of the important political parties, the Central Government and the leading Bhoodan workers took place at Yelwal in Mysore State. The idea of pooling all resources in meeting the challenge of gramdan villages was generally accepted. The Development Commissioner of the Orissa State called a meeting of the District and Development Officers, to which members of the Serva Seva Sangh were also invited. The question of development in Gramdan villages was generally discussed. Nearly a thousand gramdan villages happened to lie in Development Blocks. The Central Government had sanctioned 64 lakh of rupees for a five-year plan of village development in Koraput. The amount was to be spent by the Officers in charge of the N.E.S. Blocks. It was decided to spend seven lakh of rupees during 57-58; and 12,50,000 in 58-59. But, in spite of this promising start and brave resolve, nothing spectacular materialised. Instead of a united effort to develop the gramdan villages we saw the sorry spectacle of a whispering campaign against gramdan.

#### 4. A THOUGHT IN RETROSPECT :

From June 58, we started a systematic withdrawal from the field. Our expenditure was brought down to a lakh and a half in the place of five or six lakhs before. We decided to stick up to carrying on the message of gramdan to every cottage, and to consolidate development work where it had progressed.

##### *Koraput a success or failure?*

We had expected that our expenditure for four years will amount to something like thirty to forty lakhs from the Central Government Grants. We had submitted proposals for digging wells, small irrigation projects, soil conservation, school buildings, housing etc. But when we actually started the work, we had to change our original plan entirely. We realised that the first need was to build up a network of co-operative societies. We refunded nearly one-third of the amount that was granted to us by the Central Government, and actually spent only about Rs. 8 lakhs so far. If the amount spent on a project is considered to be the criterion of success of the work, then we have obviously failed. But we hold that it cannot be a test of work of this type. That we could change our targets and methods of work according to the local conditions is a measure of success in itself. When conditions were not favourable, we had the foresight to be patient and go slow. We have no regrets and have no reason to feel apologetic for our inability to produce spectacular results.

Today, we have nearly a hundred workers in Koraput. We have not been able to weld them into a team. There is still avoidable overlapping and waste. The first flush of romantic enthusiasm has passed and workers have a better appreciation of the prevailing conditions. They are in a chastened mood of realism. They are willing to be patient and stand and wait when necessary. They have realised that progress is possible, if they stand united and are of one mind. They are surrounded by a wall of opposition of the powerful vested interests.

*Problems of Leadership :*

The Sarva Seva Sangh formally took the decision in December 1958 to withdraw from the field. They were trying to limit their organizational responsibility, and hand over the work to the local people. The workers gradually appreciating the new orientation are preparing themselves to take up the responsibilities that are coming on to them. Most of them belong to the state of Orissa. But very few of them belong actually to Koraput. The development work in Koraput can achieve better results only if new leadership from the ranks of the Adivasis comes forward and Government machinery shows better appreciation of the problem. There is such a vast difference in the social, educational and cultural standards of the local population and our workers that we shall have to 'declass' ourselves and create a sense of equality, a feeling of genuine friendliness between ourselves and the Adivasis. For every hundred workers who come from outside we must have a thousand local workers. We must strive to achieve this target. The Sarva Seva Sangh is there to give guidance and advice; the initiative and executive responsibility must come from the local people.

The question then arises of finding out an effective method of creating enthusiasm in the people, and providing them with opportunities for developing their abilities. Literacy alone is not very important. It is through the management of co-operatives and participation in collective tasks that they would acquire knowledge. So far the educated worker has been the main source of authority and initiative. The local workers have been playing a very minor role carrying out orders of the superiors. They may take some time to learn the art of book-keeping. In that case in the initial stage a clerk can be appointed for that work. Our workers must now play the role of a fellow citizen of the village. The initiative should always be with the village community. They must for the time being sever their connections with the world outside and stay in one place. They cannot afford to be constantly on the move. They must bury themselves in one area for some years. Only then, is there a possibility of conditions being created which are favourable to the emergence of local leadership. We have realised the truth of this through the method of trial and error. It would be presumptuous to claim that we have found

a satisfactory answer. But tentatively this seems to be the only practicable method of tackling the problem.

*Garanda—a commendable experiment:*

I find the instance of Garanda quite notable in this respect. Shri Govind Reddy started work there in the month of January 1956. The village has thirty-one families. Seventeen cultivators had their own land. Fourteen were landless. He concentrated his attention on this village. The first thing he attempted was to redistribute the land. Bullocks and land were given to fourteen landless families. He could not do much in the first year, to improve the soil or method of cultivation. Some preferred to work as labourers in the field of another and neglected their own land. The Sarvodaya principle of helping the lowest did not succeed in the first attempt. However, the total production of the village increased by about 40 per cent. (But the per capita income did not show an appreciable rise).

Shri Reddy thought about this and started a new plan. He bought a pair of bullocks for the centre, and got prepared some implements. He then began to go to some one's field and work himself there as a labourer for seven or eight hours a day. He would begin work every morning at seven sharp. Even the shirkers were persuaded to follow his example and to work with him. He developed such friendly relations with every family that he would talk to the house-wives and enquire if there was enough in the house to eat. Everyone recognized him as a friend and a guide. He told everyone that no one must go hungry. He went and gave grains to those who had not enough to eat. He began to get the villagers to assemble together at night twice or thrice a week. I must say that he did create a new type of leadership. There is no doubt, that he has succeeded in changing the outlook of the people of the village. The people are becoming fearless and are now conscious of their responsibilities. They are improving their lands and adopting new methods of cultivation. The village council meets regularly. Shri Reddy has now gone to some place in Madhya Pradesh. But the village people still look to him for guidance. He visits Garanda for short periods twice or thrice a year. The villagers had recently sent a batch of young men to him for study. They lived with him for about four months and returned. We have learnt from him that short training courses could be conducted with advantage for the young men from the villages. No doubt, Garanda today is an outstanding village in Koraput.

I feel, that it is worth trying to give the various local works that are conducted under the N.E.S. Blocks, on contract basis to the Gram Sabha in the area. The Sarva Seva Sangh should provide the technical guidance to the Gram Sabha in that case. Some money could be earned by the Gram Sabha this way. It would be earmarked for training camps. Documentary films should be shown for imparting general information.

Thus the co-operatives would enlarge the field where earning and learning are combined. A new cadre of workers would then come forth; and it would create a proper climate for developing Gram Swaraj.

In the last three years, we have been holding training camps of two or three days' duration in many places. In the villages where land was redistributed Gram Sabha had begun to function. We held special classes for the members of the Gram Sabhas. Various problems of the village life were discussed at these meetings. Gradually the representatives got over their shyness and began taking active part in the discussions. They are men of sound common sense, though steeped in tradition. They have their private responsibilities. They are willing to work for the common good, only up to the point where their personal interest does not suffer. For creating a new spirit in the people, there is need of more imaginative leadership. We shall need to re-educate our workers, if this orientation had to be given to our work. Like Shri Reddy our workers must have the capacity to do physical labour like any other Adivasi. He must be able to do manual work more efficiently. It is only through sharing of common work that a revolutionary spirit can be imparted to the people. Mere repetition of the mantra of Gramdan is not enough. We have to create new outlook and impart scientific knowledge and ability to them, so that they can discharge their day-to-day functions of development. Creating a new leadership on this line in every village and making the Gram Sabha function efficiently is the real need of the hour.

#### *Gramdan — a reassessment :*

The Gramdan movement has been going on for seven years now. It has passed the period when it was at its apex. It looks like being on the decline now. This is very disturbing and deserves a serious thought. It was hoped that the movement would help in some measure in solving the most difficult land problem of our country. When whole villages started to be given in Gramdan, this hope was redoubled. Gramdan was looked upon as a logical culmination or fruition of Bhoodan. Workers felt very confident and went from village to village with the message of Gramdan. But today we find that the flow of new Gramdans is withering. The work in villages which have declared Gramdan is also not going on satisfactorily. Development work does not promise to create a significant change in the outlook and mode of living of the people of villages.

I confess, we started talking of Gramdan too hastily. The propaganda for Bhoodan should have continued side by side with Gramdan. There would have been no feeling of a setback if we had continued to work for Bhoodan also.

Another mistake we committed was to take the responsibility of redistributing Bhoodan lands, on ourselves. We should have entrusted that to the local donors from the very beginning. We should have created

such a climate in every village that the movement would continue till there was not a single landless in the village. The handful of workers we had could not handle the question of redistribution expeditiously. It is true that in most places the new donees brought the land under plough. But it cannot be denied that the donees did not become propagandist of the new idea. We had not given them the necessary equipment for that purpose. Gramdan in practice has developed a special meaning. Vinobaji gave a workable definition of Gramdan when he was trekking in Rajasthan. He said,

- (i) "The village should undertake the responsibility for seeing that no one remains landless;
- (ii) that everyone has employment;
- (iii) that no one starves, that is, every family of unemployed and starving must be provided for;

If all this is accepted intelligently by the villagers, the continuance of private property in land would be of very little importance.

We failed in creating a sustained enthusiasm for 'Sampattidan' in urban areas. Gramdan was obviously the movement of the villages. Towns remained completely outside the orbit. A revolution has to have a universal appeal. Gramdan was always a sectional movement. I would make bold to say that land Revolution would not be effected even if every village was to declare its Gramdan. It would be necessary to develop village industries and bring our entire industrial policy in line with the village industries. In other words there must be no antagonism between big industry and village industry. If the village is to function as a family, private property and profit cannot continue in the towns. Their economy will, also, have to be altered radically. If we have today a voluntary liquidation of private property in land in 4,000 villages, it is, no doubt, a welcome change. But that by itself does not solve the land problem of the country. The objective of the Gramdan movement is to create a new incentive and motive for living. It aims at the creation of a New Social Order. Gramdan is not a magic wand which can produce a heaven overnight. Our development activity is essentially a medium for bringing about a change in the heart and mind of men. It is a method of 'uniting hearts' that have been torn asunder. We rarely emphasised the idea of ending private property in land, in our work in Koraput, though we strove vigilantly to redistribute land again and again to achieve a near equality in holdings.

#### *Concept of village – self-sufficiency :*

I would like to say something about the notion of village self-sufficiency. It has been accepted as one of the tenets of Gandhian economics. I confess that my ideas about self-sufficiency have undergone some change. The romantic idea I had accepted all these long years, has become, if I may say so, more realistic. It has passed through the

fire of actuality. The village does not exist in isolation; it cannot be separated from the vast mass of national and international circles of widening economic activity. One cannot put a village in a watertight compartment and hope to create a brave new Social Order there.

Koraput is a mountainous tract. Communications are hardly developed. The so-called villages are small hamlets of 10 or 20 families. They are scattered sparsely in the wide hills and jungles. There are 6000 such villages in Koraput. Can we plan the development of everyone of these hamlets separately? After all as development begins, communications are bound to improve. We shall be required to integrate some of these hamlets together and decide on a minimum population for a settlement of villages. Then alone we can think of providing schools, drinking water, post offices and such other social amenities. Is there any special sanctity in maintaining their isolated seclusion? And would it ever be possible to develop these tiny hamlets each by itself. If we decide to follow the example of Sweden and give over the entire management of the jungles to the villages, the site and size of the present hamlets will have to be inevitably changed. Similarly if mining industry develops, as it is bound to, in a centralised or decentralised form, it is going to change materially the size of the village. Muchkund area has begun to produce electricity. Nearly 10,000 Kilowatts of electric power is being sent out. If tomorrow this power is to be used in the local area, the social life will be changed out of recognition. Planning is possible when we take a whole region or an area into account. Even today, villagers from long distances attend the weekly bazaar; and the ideal of self-sufficiency hardly exists. Self-sufficiency, therefore, has to be re-defined and applied intelligently after taking all the peculiar local conditions into account. No one can take village self-sufficiency too literally. The Government derive an income of nearly Rs. 22,00,000 from the jungles in Koraput. When our new plan comes into existence, are we going to stop this source of gain, because it militates against our idea of self-sufficiency? Or, if we introduce horticulture and coffee plantation in areas situated at a height of 3000 ft. above sea level, are we going to ban trade in these commodities? I have said all this because it is important to think afresh on this important question and understand all its implications.

The district of Koraput exports Paddy and Rice and Niger seed worth about 3 to 4 lakhs. People in the district produce paddy, but consume very little of rice themselves. They produce niger seeds more as money crop. It is mostly exported. They use oil of Mohuwa seeds for home consumption. This cannot be stopped. We shall have to accept it as an economic fact in our development programme. I admit it is a confession that we cannot create conditions of self-sufficiency even in regard to the basic everyday needs. We did try to form co-operatives and Grain Stores. But, we have learnt by experience that a part of this produce must be allowed to be sold for keeping the wheels of economy

moving. With the development of the area, the rural areas are bound to come in close contacts with the urban areas. If employment for 300 days in a year is to be ensured to the villager, the village will have to produce much more and exchange it through its co-operative with other areas. We shall inevitably have to think in terms of Regional self-sufficiency and then probably of National self-sufficiency. A certain mutuality and reciprocity is simply unavoidable. Hard and fast geographic areas cannot be demarcated in the field of genuine development.

Self-sufficiency for me connotes an economic order which ensures full employment and widest opportunity of self-development to all. It is a society in which class conflict and exploitation does not exist. There would be greater equality and parity in wages for various grades of work. In such a social order there need be no reason for conflict between Regional and National self-sufficiency.

#### *A disputed line :*

I would like to refer to certain objections that were raised by the theoreticians of Sarvodaya philosophy to the various activities we were doing in Koraput. It was asked whether it was right for a body like Sarva Seva Sangh to undertake duties of a commercial concern and take the responsibility of executing a plan of development mainly financed by the Central Government. Would it be right for the Sangh to invite and utilize the services of experts who did not necessarily believe in Sarvodaya? Were the objects of N. E. S. Blocks in tune with the Gandhian principles of Sarvodaya, with whom a handshake was planned in Koraput? These and such other questions were being raised at every step. It was quite natural that these questions should arise. For instance if we had not started development work in such a primitive and backward area, I myself would never have ventured in these unorthodox fields of activity. We may have restricted ourselves purely to the Gandhian methods of approach, and development. The Government hope to cover every village in the country with Community Development work before 1961. A village level worker will be posted everywhere. Why should then, it is asked, a body like Sarva Seva Sangh take up such routine tasks? We have distributed loans to the tune of Rs. 2,00,000 in about 600 villages, and have to recover these loans like a Banker. We charged interest like the Grain Gola Society in the Region. We had thus worked like a commercial concern. Was it right?

The Government have a special department called P. W. D. We had, also, to develop a special department which was manned by two or three highly trained engineers and overseers. We had a skeleton department of Public Health and Education. We had to give legal aid to the local people. In some places we had to ply our trucks for the transport of goods. We had, in short, developed a machinery of governance on a small scale. We met the situation as it arose. We were in dead earnest,

and therefore not too bound to any dogma. We experimented boldly. It is all the more necessary, therefore to look back and ask : 'Did we act rightly?'

The Government is often charged with being dogmatic and bound by red tape. We were free of this. We had a certain elasticity and tentativeness. We had the humility to accept primacy of facts, and keep aside theories when they did not fit in with them. We did not stick up to any rigid plan. But I must confess that we had not the requisite skill and methodical habit of doing a task thoroughly. There was a certain amount of slipshodness and unmethodical and unbusinesslike despatch in some of the tasks we were forced to undertake.

We had unwillingly created a parallel organization to the Administration in some ways. Even the Government never functioned quite efficiently and promptly in some of the areas in Koraput. They had to get things done through contractors. They have already prepared a plan for a Special Development Corporation for the area — the Dandakaranya Plan. If the Government had treated the work that was done by Sarva Seva Sangh on the same footing, we may not have reached a blind alley in the progress of the development work. Development work of this kind is bound to grow. We have to mobilise the total available constructive talent in the land. There is so far no monolithic answer to the problem of economic development. One would wish for a multitudinous variety of experiments in this line. Such experiments could be conducted with advantage when they are not conducted in isolation, and treated with indifference or suspicion.

The Sarva Seva Sangh had a definite Plan. Their approach to the problem was of 'unto this last' or of 'Antyodaya'. They wanted to touch those belonging to the most depressed and exploited in society who formed nearly 25% of the population. They wanted to rehabilitate some of the uprooted sections of humanity and set them going on the path of development. Everything possible was attempted by us. We accepted help and co-operation from every quarter. We confess — we came to an impasse — and had to withdraw from many of the activities we had started. But that is of very little consequence. The problem remains unsolved. We have got to find an answer to it. How can the lowest strata of our people be awakened to the sense of its dignity and duty? How can the common man in the village be stirred to co-operative effort? How to transform the dead and ugly look of the village into a living and throbbing community?

We had to accept the limitations of an organization like Sarva Seva Sangh. It is essentially an organization devoted to education in its widest sense. It has to inculcate social values and create a climate of co-operative effort. It cannot take up executive tasks, I must confess, as we did in the early stages of work in Koraput.

Its function is to create cadres of workers who have the knowledge

and expertise in the various fields of development. It should be a force that helps vitalise the network of co-operatives and Gram Sabhas that have been started in Koraput.

### 5. CRITICISM OF KORAPUT.

Vinobaji's walking tour in Orissa was notable. It opened a new chapter in the Bhoodan movement. It created a sensation in the country. It raised expectations in the minds of the people. The Koraput experiment was being watched with keen interest by politicians, revolutionaries and students of social engineering with keen interest. Young men from all parts of the country came forward and offered their services for the development work in Koraput. The Central Government took very kindly to this work and was prepared to offer generous help for the development work undertaken. It is in the fitness of things therefore, that a resume of the work we have done during the last four years should be undertaken. It will also mean evaluation of various activities we had undertaken. It would be instructive to find out why and where, we have failed.

#### *Gramdan and Private ownership :*

I am often asked, if the people in the Gramdan villages in Koraput have consciously discarded the idea of private, individual ownership in land. In fact, some would consider this to be the test of a Gramdan. They also enquire if something like near equality has been attained in the family holdings of land; if bullocks and implements are owned collectively and if agricultural production has gone up. They are also eager to know if individual debts have been taken over by the Gramsabha. All these, I concede, are very relevant questions; and it is right that they should be posed.

#### *Gramdan and the Adivasi :*

However Gramdan has been accepted by the Adivasis in a limited sense. To them it means two things : (i) That no one should remain landless in the village; and (ii) No one should have to starve. In nearly four hundred villages, land was transferred in 1955-56. Ninety per cent of this transferred land has remained with the donees without any legal sanction. One is amazed at the high standard of honesty and truthfulness that these starving tribal folk have shown. There has been no stress on the giving up of individual ownership. Actually we had been soft pedalling that point. We felt that it was not immediately necessary to stress it. We emphasised the following points :—

- (i) Every family should have some land;
- (ii) Landholdings should be not too unequal;

- (iii) About ten per cent of the total land of the village should be set aside and cultivated through the voluntary labour of the whole village; and land revenue of the whole village and other welfare activities should be paid for through the income of this land;
- (iv) Special effort for land improvement should be put in. 1/10th of the holders' additional income should be given to the Gramsabha for development work;
- (v) Individual debts should be taken over by the Gramsabha; which should try to settle with the money lender, in the light of the changed context. No one hereafter should raise a loan in his individual capacity. The Gramsabha should raise loans for the needy individual.
- (vi) Villagers should practise neighbourly help in agricultural operations;
- (vii) All buying and selling should be done through the village co-operative; and
- (viii) Marriages in a family and such other social functions should be celebrated under the auspices of the Community.

*Gramdan – a gradual process :*

It was through a gradual progress on these lines that we hoped to reach a stage where people will willingly slough off the idea of individual ownership. The local people are marching towards the ideal condition. It would be wrong to say that our experiment in Koraput has failed because private ownership still remains. It is well to remember, that it is a process of building up a non-violent social order. Coercion or force has no place in this scheme. The change is bound to be gradual. The direction and the pace of change in Koraput can certainly be called satisfactory in this sense.

It should be remembered that the Gramdan experiment has been something like the attempt to create "a moral man in an immoral society". In an economic order based on private property and profit we were trying to create an oasis of co-operative living and co-sharing. The machinery of the Government, traditions, social conventions, the money lender, the shop-keeper, the whole apparatus of economic and social living was opposed to our ideas. They were trying systematically to sabotage our experiment. The fact that a vast majority loyally stood by Gramdan as they understood it, and continued to support our efforts, speaks volumes for their goodness and right intention. They have certainly shown public morality which is rarely seen.

*Gramdan and Gram Sabha :*

The proper functioning of a Gram Sabha should be the orientation of a Gramdan. The people in the Koraput district are so backward and live in such primitive conditions that we never expected them to stand immediately on their own feet and take up the responsibility for development work. The average annual income of a family in that area is barely two hundred rupees. They are forced to live on roots and wild fruits in the jungles for two or three months every year. It was inevitable that they should need outside help for development. It is well to remember that the problem in Koraput was more of rehabilitation than development. We were never in doubt about this. Even in the original plan which was submitted to the Govt. of India, we had said, that an expenditure of nearly five hundred rupees per family would be necessary for rehabilitation. Accordingly a sum of a crore of rupees was provided for the rehabilitation of twenty thousand families during five to ten years. It was submitted that the co-operative should give short term loans for agricultural improvement to the tune of twenty-five lakhs. In other words it was a programme to increase per capita income of a family to six or seven hundred rupees annually, before launching a programme of development. Without the necessary foundation, expenditure on development is bound to be wasteful and ineffective. Those who appreciate this and understand the complexity of the problem will not be in a hurry to apply easy tests to the Gramdans in this area. The peculiar economic conditions in Koraput must always be borne in mind. Probably the process and the results in different conditions would be different. What is true in Koraput may not be true in places which are not so backward. But it is well to remember that in our country the number of families whose annual income borders on two hundred rupees, comes to nearly 2 crores. For all this section of society the first task will be that of rehabilitation. Evidently outside help in these cases becomes an unavoidable necessity in the initial stage.

*Gramdan Work and N.E.S. :*

It is often questioned if the nature of the development work we have been trying to carry out in Koraput was materially different from the things that are being attempted in the N.E.S. Blocks and Community Development. The Government sponsored programme consists, I would say, mainly of the items of social amenities and to some extent erection of a skeleton of a distributive service in the field of agricultural production. I don't mean to say that aspects of organization of production are ignored there. On the contrary everything has been started with that basic idea. But first things haven't come first. This is the point I would like to emphasize in this case. For instance the programme followed by Sarva Seva Sangh had priorities fixed on the following lines :

- (i) Equal or near equal distribution of land;
- (ii) Establishment of Gram Sabha as the chief holder;
- (iii) A village Co-operative of which every family is a member;
- (iv) Distribution of bullocks, other implements, seed and manure through Gram Sabha.

We were insistent that the Gram Sabha and the Co-operative should be compact. It should never consist of more than 200 families. We followed this policy in the centres we developed in Koraput. Projects that were executed by private contractors were given to the Gram Sabha for execution. Often funds allocated for some specific objects remained unexpended because of our insistence that the work should be got done through Gram Sabha. It did bring, at times, a measure of discredit. But we didn't mind it.

The Adivasi in Koraput lives in a simple thatched roof. He has not yet learnt the art of making bricks and building a house. He doesn't know masonry. Construction of houses in Koraput is done by the labourers who are imported in the district from other parts of Orissa and Andhra. The Sarva Seva Sangh decided, therefore, to build structures in the way the Adivasi knew. We built 156 Community Houses with their help. The quality and type of the structure would change as the Adivasi begins to learn crafts like carpentry, masonry. We could utilise only a fraction of amount that was earmarked for building purposes. We followed the same policy in the execution of the programme of soil conservation and minor irrigation. Our attitude all along had been mainly educative. We looked upon the Gram Panchayat or Gram Sabhas as schools of training the Adivasis. Ultimately we had to be prepared to walk at their pace. Obviously this slowed down the tempo of work and some mistakes were committed. But we could not afford to be in a hurry and perpetuate the same mistakes.

It is only when we walk at their pace that the work we are doing will develop a sap, and grow after a time in geometrical progression. It is no good announcing some targets and fulfilling them somehow or other in a hurry. So the difference lies in our outlook and method of work. The Government approach is mainly executive. Ours is mainly educative. Another way in which the vital difference between the two methods can be expressed is to say that our development work is an essay in building a society in which the most exploited will receive the first attention on the lines of 'Unto this last'. We have to begin with rehabilitation before we can think of development. This could be illustrated by the method that was followed in providing irrigation in Gramdan areas. We chose villages where redistribution had taken place and where there was a chance of all landholders getting water. Every cultivator, we believed, must get some wet land. Land was redistributed six times in Garanda. The immediate objective of the Community projects is to increase the production

of agriculture. Our objective is to rehabilitate 'The Last', that is, those who are in the sub-stratum of society.

*Individual allotment of land :*

We are aware that the propriety of our policy of parcelling out donated lands into individual units, is often questioned. True: we began by parcelling out land for individual families in Koraput. It was, mainly, because of peculiar backwardness of the people. Where agricultural technique is so primitive and where it is a losing concern, it would be advisable to begin with individual cultivation. As the lands are improved, new techniques are popularised, and yields increased, progress can be made towards co-operative farming. Individual holding is obviously more suited to intensive cultivation. In most parts of the country we shall have to resort to intensive cultivation. Money crops could be tried on co-operative basis. Capacity for management is a very important factor. If Gram Sabha undertakes the task of planning and supervision, and wields the authority the actual mode of cultivation is a secondary factor.

Gramdan, no doubt, means the ending of private property in land. But it means much more. Bullocks and implements would also have to be owned by the Gram Sabha. It has to bring the whole agricultural industry of the village on what Dr. Gadgil has called, 'Plant' and 'Firm' basis. The Gram Sabha would be the lynch pin. It would undertake crop-planning, and decide on the size of the holdings. Maximum utilization of individual capacity and resources would be effected by the plan that the Gram Sabha makes. It is wrong to give undue emphasis to the mode of cultivation. It could be individual, co-operative or collective. It would, in other words, depend on the capacity of the people of a village to create the requisite organization and ability for management.

In Koraput we had to begin with creating a taste and developing a capacity for intensive farming. Agriculture for an Adivasi is a secondary occupation. He draws his subsistence, mainly from the jungle. They have a natural aptitude for exploitation of jungle wealth. In such cases individual cultivation was the right approach. It is true that there was danger of creating a sense of ownership in their minds. But the recurrent redistribution of land was an antidote for this. The management also vested in the Gram Sabha which was helpful in keeping sense of ownership within limits.

*Gramdan and Agricultural production:*

We are asked if agricultural production has gone up materially after Gramdan; if we have undertaken a big plan of liquidating debts of the local people. Our emphasis all along has been on encouraging credit co-operatives. Production will go up in the measure that the Adivasi is released from the tentacles of the money-lender and the trader. Exploitation from this source must be stopped first. We attempted to work for

increased production only in some selected centres. We had some demonstration farms which were training centres also; and production did increase there.

*'Community Land' programme:*

Redistribution of land has been completed in 756 villages. In about a half of them a certain percentage (5 to 10%) of land has been set aside for community cultivation. The yield from this land was to be used for development work. We found, however, that the per capita holding and the quality of land differed from village to village. In the area of Gunupur and Gudari, the average per capita holding came to 0.40 acres, whereas in an area like Nowrangpur it was about 2.44 acres; and in Koraput it was only 1.00 acre. In areas where the average holding was above 1 acre the people of the village, did set aside land for 'community cultivation' voluntarily. Nearly 350 villages have now some community land. In some others they have what they call 'Service lands'. It is generally in the name of the 'Nayak' of the village. We were given to understand that after Gramdan, such 'Service Lands' would be given over to the Gram Sabha. The villagers took it for granted that this land would be for Community farming. But for various reasons this has not materialised. Government have not taken any policy decision in this matter.

It is necessary to give some details about the method of farming that is followed for the land left aside for community cultivation. For instance, in Nowrangpur sub-division, every owner of a plough is supposed to come and work on this land. They take turns in ploughing it up. In some places they fix a date and all come with their ploughs on that day. In some places villagers gave a step-motherly attention to the community land. They either neglected it altogether and let it lie fallow or gave partial attention to it. In some places it was farmed out to some families for cultivation. In certain villages for instance 'Akeli' in Ganjam District, the villagers gave their time and energy to the improvement of community land. They followed the Japanese method of cultivation of paddy and produced 3,000 rupees worth of rice. In Garanda, they have been eclectic about their methods. In the first year, they farmed it out to tenants. In the second, they worked collectively on it; and every family was given a share of the produce as dividend. In the third year, they decided to liquidate the debt of the whole village from the produce on this land. This has, now, induced the villagers to give some of their own land to the collective pool. Ten acres are thus, set aside for common cultivation. They expect to liquidate the entire debt in three years. When they realised that this target could not be achieved in three years, they improved another 6 acres of fallow land and increased the total number of acreage to 16 acres.

The experiment of community cultivation yielded good results where

the local worker had the right outlook and ability. It could not show any results where it was left to the villagers. I am often asked if the success of the experiment has widened the areas of collective action in the general life of the community. I have no doubt that it should certainly be helpful in diluting the sense of private individual ownership. It is too early to say if the experiment has produced wider results.

*Gramdan and new incentives:*

It was claimed by our workers that Gramdan would build up a non-competitive, co-operative society. The caste and class tensions that are rampant in the country would be ended by Gramdan. Unfortunately, conditions in Koraput were different. I have no data to speak of social tensions before and after. Villagers here, as I have said above, are very small. The Adivasis here are composed of 12 different tribes. Generally a village has people of some one tribe. They are in that way more or less homogeneous. Caste tension as such hardly exists. There is no class of untouchables here except the segregated Dom. But he is socially not downtrodden. The 12 tribes, it is true, do not intermarry. In every tribe there are two classes. One of those who eat meat and take drink; and the other of those who abstain from it. We looked upon the Gram Sabha for creating a healthy sense of social responsibility and solidarity. That's all.

*Gramdan and the common man:*

It was claimed that Gramdan restores initiative and responsibility to the common man. The leadership principle plays small part. The society we are trying to build is not pyramidal but is oceanic. I am asked if a People's will and initiative has come into existence in Koraput. I must confess I have not the data to answer this question in the affirmative or negative. All I can say is that there are some centres where people have begun to participate as equals with understanding and willingness. In Garanda, for instance, there is no outside leader today. Shri Govind Reddy stayed there for 2 years, and has gone away to some place in Madhya Pradesh. The villagers had sent 6 young men to him for 6 months' for general training. They have recently returned. The Gram Sabha wants to continue this plan and send a few promising youths for a training course. They have a Gram Sabha that meets regularly and a buying and selling Co-operative Society operates. People of the village discuss their problems boldly. The 31 families of the village are working together in peace and goodwill. Excepting for an old man who was given special permit, they have voluntarily accepted total prohibition.

Another instance of this kind is of 60 villages in Nandpur Police Station area. They have established a 'Vanvasi Seva Mandal', which has a membership of 162 individuals. They meet on the 30th of every month and discuss their problems. They have discussed about the rules and

regulations of the jungle, which cause hardship to them, of corruption of the forest and other departments. They have sent 20 young men to Koraput for a training course in Ambar Charkha. They have a desire to introduce 500 Ambar Charkhas in that area. The number of educated workers from outside, in this area, is very small. Development work is being done mostly by the local people. They have applied for Registration of about 6 Agricultural Co-operative Societies. A good number of people here have returned from Assam where they have put in few years work as Tea Plantation labourers. They understand well the importance of local organization and can provide local leadership. There are about 40 full-time workers out of the local population. All that they need is a little guidance.

Whereas in Rayagada and Koraput the worker has to take responsibility of Gram Sabha on his shoulder, local leadership is not yet forthcoming. As the Adivasi gets new consciousness and ability through the development work that is going on, he will stand up on his feet and assume leadership. Our task and privilege is to guide these people, and give them the necessary help.

## 6. WHAT NEXT IN KORAPUT.

I would like to give a brief description of the present trend of development work in Koraput; and state the broad outline of the plan we have in view.

### *Intensive Development Areas:*

(1) We have today three Blocks of 'Intensive Area Development' programme of A.I. Khadi and Village Industries Commission. There are about 10 to 15 full-time workers in each one of these areas. They are trying to form Agricultural Co-operative Societies in every village, and to form a Union of these primary Societies. These Societies would be registered under the State Co-operative Act. It would, then, be possible to get long and short term advances, required for Agricultural Development Programme. This question is under consideration of the State Government at present.

Similar attempts to build Village Co-operatives are being carried on in villages outside the Intensive Areas. A special effort is being made to establish Forest-labour Co-operatives. A great deal depends on the policy the State Government finally adopts in its dealings with these Societies which would be formed in this Adivasi Area.

An effort is, also, being made in the 'Intensive Areas' to form labour-contract-societies, which would undertake some or all of the work that individual contractors are doing today on behalf of the Government or other local bodies.

Khadi production is one of the main items in the programme of the Khadi Commission. We hope to take up spinning and weaving as items in the Basic Education Syllabus. A 'Parishramalaya' in Jeypore and Nowrangpur has been started. About 75 Ambar Charkhas are plying in these centres. They produce nearly 10,000 hanks of yarn; that means this work will provide employment to 10 weavers. We have just had them trained. Another 10 would be given training when the school for weaving starts. The target for this work is to distribute 500 Ambar Charkhas and train up the 150-200 weavers in weaving handspun yarn. A 'Workshop' (Saranjam Karyalaya) at Rayaghada is functioning for last three years.

At the laboratory started for investigating some of the problems of exploiting Forest and Mineral resources in the region, 4 chemists are doing research work. Experiments in smelting iron ore with the aid of improved kilns are in progress. Successful experiments were conducted on manufacturing enamel paints from marking-nut-oil. A pilot plant would be established very soon.

#### *A New Pilot Project :*

Sarva Seva Sangh has offered to take up the responsibility for a development Block of the N.E.S. in this area. That would give us an opportunity to put through an integrated programme which would include soil-conservation, irrigation, road building, education, and sanitation, in an area of 400 sq. miles containing 192 villages comprising a population of 28,000. The number of villages which have declared Gramdan in this area is 80. The rest of the villages have not declared Gramdan so far. We have called this Project 'A Project unto the last' or 'Antyodaya Project'. A regular proposal has been submitted to Government. If the Government accept the Sarvodaya approach and let us make the experiment, we shall put our shoulders to the wheel and do our best to put this through. We may have to alter the priorities and introduce some basic changes in the routine type of programme generally followed in N.E.S. Blocks. We would broadly undertake programmes on following lines:—

- (1) Instead of a Gram Panchayat and a Co-operative for every 5 to 7 thousand population, a Panchayat and a co-operative for every 800 or 1000 of the population would be organized. A sum of Rs. 5,000 would be advanced to each one of these village Co-operatives as initial capital and they would be persuaded to try and augment their capital to about Rs. 25,000/-.
- (2) A Union of 25 such Co-operatives would be formed and all the rules of a marketing Society would be applied to the Co-operative Union. It would also receive necessary advances as capital.
- (3) An area of about 64,000 acres is under Forest in this Block.

Here Forest Co-operative Societies alone will have the right to exploit the Forest wealth.

(4) Education in this area would be the responsibility of Sarva Seva Sangh. They would appoint teachers, start schools.

There would be a Liaison Committee consisting of 3 representatives of A.B.S.S. Sangh, the Collector and the Divisional or Development Commissioner. The Project should be run under the overall direction of this Committee. All appointments whether of experts or officers should be made by the Sarva Seva Sangh.

Sarva Seva Sangh desires fervently to make this experiment. We have called it an experiment in 'Antyodaya' that is for the development of the lowest, the most exploited and backward strata of Society. Agricultural land and population ratio in this area approximates to about 2 acres per head. That means we shall have to allocate 8 to 10 acres of land per family and give them the implements and means to cultivate it properly. After all we are out to rehabilitate these people on land. We must prepare a plan, the first objective of which would be to give employment to every adult for 300 days in a year. We are planning to start work on these lines in the Boipariguda Police Station Area if the Government means to co-operate.

All this sounds big. It is only a way of utilizing the available resources in doing some spade work and building up intimate contacts with the local population. The work by itself can hardly be called revolutionary. I would hesitate to think of it as ideal development activity as well. We have reached the point from which further progress is possible only if and when the Government accept our point of view and exert themselves fully in the development work.

*REPORT ON KORAPUT GRAMDANS*

*PART II*

*REVIEW OF WORK*

## *Chapter 1*

### **THE PROGRAMME AND FINANCES**

#### *1. The Programme :*

Sarva Seva Sangh assumed the responsibilities of work in Koraput towards the end of 1955. Broadly speaking these responsibilities were twofold in nature :—

(i) helping the local Gram Sabhas in effectively handling the problems of land distribution, Land management and Land development, through a suitable training programme for the village leaders; and

(ii) helping the new units in mobilizing required resources and utilizing them properly, by providing, initially, an organizational framework to accomplish these tasks.

#### *Demonstration Cum-Development Centres :*

As stated in (i) above, the Sangh decided to organize few *Demonstration cum-Development Centres*. It was presumed that the work conducted here should provide a 'model' for rest of the areas; and the experience gained there would be utilized for building a training programme. 8 such centres were selected and work started. Selection of these centres was mainly weighed by representative geographical and social conditions prevailing in different pockets. These centres were to attempt comprehensive development programmes for all round development of the villages. (A further reference is made to this topic under chapter on Development of Gram Sabhas).

#### *A Minimum Programme :*

While intensive work, thus, was organized on a restricted scale, a *Minimum Programme* for the villages in the vicinity of these centres was proposed, so that initiatives of right type would foster and a favourable ground for intensive development at a later stage, would be prepared. The nature of the *Minimum Programme* recommended and attempted in the surrounding villages is given below :—

(a) In Gramdan villages the first stage of any programme was *land distribution*. The workers would help villagers in distributing their lands equitably.

(b) Secondly the village would keep 5 acres or 5% of the total land (whichever is the minimum) as '*community land*' and would *cultivate it 'on community basis'*.

Where these prerequisites of the programme were existing, the Project arranged to give one bullock pair, if needed, for cultivating the Community Land, as Grant-in-aid. And if the Community land is to be re-

claimed or banded, a further Grant-in-aid towards land development was made available at the rate of Rs. 10 to 50 per acre depending upon the condition of the land.

(c) Such Gramdan villages, were *to pool all the produce of the 'Village Community land'* and treat the same as *share capital* for taking up development activities under a co-operative system, in subsequent years.

(d) As a next step such a village was to *try to spread similar programme in the surrounding 8 or 10 villages thus building itself into a 'Centre'* covering 150 to 200 families in a radius of about 3 miles. The village would endeavour to create a bigger and more viable Community for undertaking further development works and for organizing Social Services.

(e) Once the village took initiatives on these lines, the project was to undertake the following activities by stages :

(i) When the Gram Sabha, thus collected a share capital, the *project would advance a loan upto 10 times the share capital* for operating a 'Co-operative Provision Stores' for the group of villages.

(ii) At this stage the *Marketing Section* was to step in, if the villagers so desire, and *construct a small godown to store all the food grains going out of that area*; it would ensure that whatever grains go out, they would go either in half processed or processed form.

(f) As a third phase of the programme, wherever villagers have shown this much response, an *Agricultural survey* was to be undertaken and a 5 year programme for land and other development of that village to be prepared by the Project staff. *All help* that was to be rendered to this Centre at this stage for implementing this programme, *was mainly in the form of short term and long term loans recoverable in easy instalments*. The Gram Sabha was, in that case, to take up the responsibility of disbursing and recovering the loans. The loans advanced for purchasing bullock-pairs, were returnable in 5 easy instalments, whereas the loans advanced for reclaiming and terracing lands were returnable in three instalments starting from 2nd year of land reclamation.

## 2. *The Outlay* :—

On this basis it was estimated that the bullock power will have to be augmented by nearly 50% of the present capacity in order to bring the total land under effective cultivation.

As regards land reclamation, it was assumed that nearly 75% of the land would have to be developed or upgraded by contour bunding etc. This would have meant an additional provision of about Rs. 25 per acre.

Crop loan needs of such village centres would approximate to Rs. 50 per family on an average.

A provision of another Rs. 50 to 60 per family as Capital for Marketing turnover, to be invested by Marketing activity was deemed necessary for stocking the food stuffs in that area.

All this meant a total provision for a 'Village Centre' on the following scale :

(i)	Grant-in-aid towards programme in the 1st phase @ Rs. 300/- per village (for 10 villages)	Rs. 3,000/-
(ii)	Loan provisions for the 2nd and 3rd phase of the programme	Rs. 50,000/-
(iii)	Investments in Marketing activity	Rs. 10,000/- Rs. 63,000/-

The Sarva Seva Sangh was contemplating to operate about 20 such centres upto June 1958. Thus the total requirement amounted to Rs. 60,000 as Grant-in-aid and Rs. 12,00,000 as Loan Fund.

### 3. Financial Resources :

This requirement was visualised apart from the expenditure planned on Demonstration-cum-training Centres' where entire programmes were planned as Grant-in-aid programmes. *Initially the work was started with the help of A. I. Khadi and Village Industries Commission by introducing their 'Intensive Area Development' programme.* Six areas were sanctioned and work started. But this did not cover any agricultural programme. A plan and budget proposals were submitted to the Government of India in Nov. '55. The total requirements according to these proposals, were grants for Rs. 13,46,550 of which Rs. 3,96,550 were to be from the A. I. Khadi and Village Industries Board, Rs. 5,40,000 from the Government of India (Ministry of Home Affairs, Tribal Welfare Department); Rs. 2,50,000 from the Orissa State Government; Rs. 1,40,000 from the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Rs. 20,000 from the A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh. In addition to this, loans amounting to Rs. 4,08,750 composed of Rs. 308,750 from the All India Khadi and Village Industries Board and Rs. 100,000 from the A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh also, were arranged.

These grants were expected to be received by March '56: and were to be utilised in the next financial year i.e. 1956-57. Considering the short time that was available for preparing and submitting budget proposals a request was made that block grants be given and a little margin allowed for appropriation of funds from one item to another.

### 4. Five-Year Programme:

However in March, 1956, at the specific request of the Orissa Government a new Five-year proposal was framed and submitted to Central Government, Ministry of Home Affairs. Expenditure programme as estimated by these proposals was of the size of Rs. 94.15 lakhs covering the period between 1956-61. Later on allocations on irrigation were reduced, and the same were added to soil conservation programme. The allocations and reallocations as proposed are given below:-

TABLE No. 1.

The Plan Proposals (Revised) for 1956-61 for Gramdan Villages in Koraput, Ganjam, and Balasore Districts submitted by the Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh to the Government of India.

Sl. No.	Particulars of Expenditure	Allocation pro- posed in March 56 (Rs. Lakhs)	Revised Allocat- ion (Rs. Lakhs)
1.	Irrigation	30.0	18.0
2.	Soil Conservation	10.0	20.0
3.	Bullock Pairs	5.0	5.0
4.	Housing	5.0	5.0
5.	Training Camps	5.0	4.0
6.	Health, Hygiene and Sanitation	3.0	3.0
7.	Demonstration Farms, Cattle Breeding Stations and Intensive Paddy Cultivation	10.0	10.0
8.	Village Industries	10.0	10.0
9.	Manufacture of Agricultural Tools, Research and Training	5.0	4.50
10.	Preparation of Reading Material	0.15	0.15
11.	Non Recurring Capital — Expenditure	5.0	4.50
12.	Probable Additional Capital Expenditure under item No. 9	5.0	Nil
13.	Loan for Marketing and Rural Credit	1.0	10.0
Total :		94.15	94.15

Note :—1. For item No. 8 the Funds were to come from the All India Khadi and Village Industries Board.  
 2. For item Nos. 12-13 from the Sarva Seva Sangh and the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.  
 3. The rest of the items were to be covered by the Government Agency.

Of the Rs. 94.15 lakhs, nearly 68 lakhs were to come from Government of India. Out of this 68 lakhs, as a first instalment, Sarva Seva Sangh received Rs. 11,92,000 in the year 1957. Previously Sangh had received Rs. 200,000 as part of the original proposals. Thus *total receipts* from Union Government amounted to Rs. 13,92,000. Of these Rs. 4,50,000 *were refunded as unspent balance in January, 1958*, when N.E.S. agency offered to undertake programmes in Gramdan villages. An abstract of Receipts and Expenditure is given under Appendix A; and a brief review of progress of work is presented under subsequent chapters.

For promotion of work on the above lines an organization consisting of an Engineering Section, an Agricultural Section, a Marketing Section and later on a Research Section was provided. The Central Office at Jeypore with its branches at Koraput, and Rayaghada was functioning as a co-ordinating link between these sections.

## Chapter II

### WORKERS IN THE PROJECT

#### 1. Composition :

The field of work in Koraput was expanding day by day. In equal measure was spreading the appeal for participation in this unique experiment. A number of young men expressed their desire to join work undertaken by Sarva Seva Sangh. There were already about 150 workers engaged in spreading the message of Bhoodan. Over and above this, the Nirman work created fresh demands for workers who had either some experience before in rural development work, or who were technically qualified for work of the type visualised in this district. The maximum number of workers engaged at any time in Gramdan work, in the project (inclusive of work in Balasore and Ganjam Districts) was 299. This peak figure was seen in June 1957, when the pressure of work had increased tremendously. However right from the beginning (November '55) upto March, 1959 the project had engaged about 186 workers on an average. The following table gives a classification of these workers as they were engaged in different branches of work which was part of the project.

TABLE No. 2.

The average number of workers classified by branch of work; and with the average Monthly Bill of remuneration of those respective branches.

Branch of Activity	Central Office	Field work	Engineering Section	Agriculture Section	Marketing Section	Saranjam Karyalaya	Other Nirman Activities	Bhoodan Vichar Prachar	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Average of Workers	16	71	9	6	14	14	16	40	186
Average monthly Bill of remuneration	1521	4636	1163	673	867	1007	1140	1706	12713

#### 2. Experience of Work:

Amongst the workers engaged in Gramdan work, there were nearly 47 women workers who had completed their training either at the training

centre at Anugul, managed by Smt. Maltidevi Choudhary; or at places like Wardha. Of these 299 workers, nearly 116 had previous experience in Bhoodan work either during the time of Vinobaji's Padyatra or even prior to his entry in Orissa. Nearly 15 had participated in the national movements launched by Gandhiji. About 38 had previous experience in constructive work.

Koraput project had its appeal all over India and in that way it drew persons from all parts of the country. There were nearly 46 workers from outside Orissa working with the project. The following table gives a broad classification of workers with their background experience, their efficiency and equipment.

TABLE No. 3.

Workers classified by their background of experience or educational qualification.

By Educational qualification and other background of experience	Matriculates	Graduates			Trained in some avocation	Trained in Basic Education	Women Workers		Experienced in Gandhian constructive work	Experienced in Bhoodan work	Those who had participated in National Movements	Probationers
		2	3	4			7	8				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
Workers*	41	20	8	100	13	47	38	116	15	53		
Percentage of Total	13.6	6.6	2.6	33.3	4.3	15.6	12.6	38.6	5.0	17.6		

\* Number inclusive of repetition involved.

Classification relates to maximum number ever working.

### 3. Remuneration:

There were nearly 12 persons busy with this work who were working honorably without accepting any remuneration from the project. They were depending on either Sampattidan or Sarvodaya Patra collections. Then there were 28 probationers who had joined work and were working on stipends. Four persons were working in Koraput but drawing their salaries from other agencies like the Accounting Section of Sarva Seva Sangh, Wardha. As regards those who were working on regular monthly remuneration none was paid more than Rs. 300 at any rate. Actually, Sarva Seva Sangh had to modify their original resolution in this respect, as they were not expected to pay more than Rs. 200 to any worker. In due appreciation of the difficulties that arose in recruiting technical personnel, Sarva Seva Sangh adopted an amendment to the original resolution and prescribed a maximum limit of Rs. 300 as salary, only in cases of technicians. Thus, there were about 3 persons who were drawing

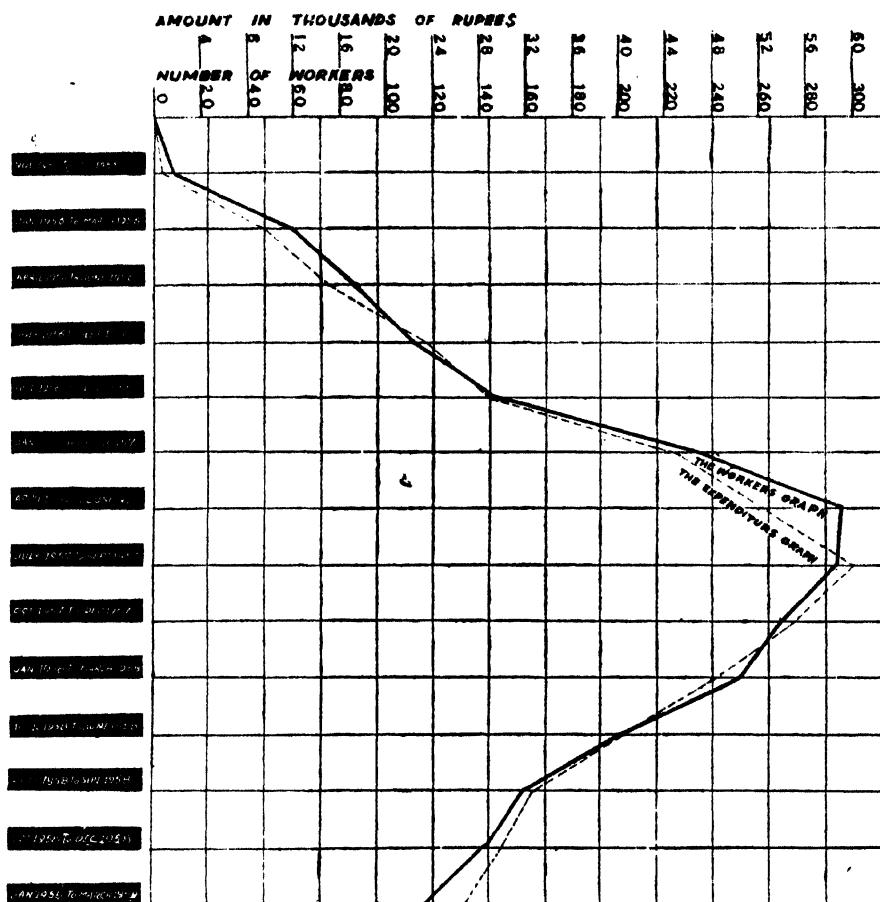
salary in that scale. Table No. 4 gives a broad classification of workers by the size of remuneration they were receiving. The maximum salary bill ever paid by the project was Rs. 59,909 for the quarter (July-September 1957) for 299 workers.

TABLE NO. 4.

Workers engaged in Koraput Project classified by the size of remuneration they were receiving — as seen in June, 1957, a month with maximum number.

By scales of Remuneration	Drawing below 50/- p.m.	Between Rs. 50/- & 75/- p.m.	Between Rs. 75/- & 100/- p.m.	Between Rs. 100/- & 150/- p.m.	Between Rs. 150/- & 200/- p.m.	Between Rs. 200/- & 300/- p.m.	Probationers work- ing on stipends	Engaged in work but not accepting any remuneration	Engaged in Korapu work but paid by other agencies	Total
Workers	64	133	37	12	4	5	28	12	4	299
Percent- of total	21.4%	44.8%	12.3%	4.0%	1.3%	1.6%	9.3%	4.0%	1.3%	100%

In June 1957, it was decided that the work of the Sarva Seva Sangh should be restricted to 200 villages operated through 10 centres. For the rest of the villages other agencies like community development or certain educational institutions desirous of taking up practical extension work, would be approached. Accordingly the project started a process of reducing the numbers, re-employing them into various other activities elsewhere, or passing them on to other agencies who had now undertaken work.



### *Chapter III*

## **TRAINING PROGRAMME**

### **1. *Background :***

The necessity for trained technical personnel was experienced right from the beginning. It was stated in the first scheme that was submitted that "We need young men and women who can understand and appreciate the ideals underlying the Nav-Nirman work, who are well-equipped by their zeal for work and by technical knowledge of their respective fields, and above all who can understand, love, and respect the people whom they are privileged to serve". As it was not likely that we would readily get this sort of personnel in the required number, we recruited even inexperienced but promising and devoted young men and trained them up to the required standard in our training centres.

In view of the huge programme of rehabilitation of landless people, it was considered necessary to have at least 10 to 15 overseers in the field of civil engineering who could help in the constructional activities of buildings, irrigation work, roads and even in soil conservation work. Then, there was necessity for agricultural assistants who could work about 40 'village centres' which were visualised as main centres of activity within next 2 to 3 years for organizing Gramdan-follow-up. These agricultural assistants, in the first instance, required training in basic agriculture, animal husbandry and soil conservation practices.

Obviously, two training courses were organised by the middle of 1956. *The Engineering Overseers' Course* started on 15th August, 1956, whereas the one for *Agricultural Assistants* on 12th September 1956. Regular advertisements were given for recruitment of these candidates. Nearly 1,800 applications were received out of which 372 were interviewed and a final selection of 35 was made to fit in these two courses.

### **2. *Engineering Overseers' Training Course :***

The Engineering Overseer's course started at Jeypore with 27 trainees, amongst whom 13 were Matriculates, 7 were Matric failed, whereas the remaining 7 had acquired education upto 10th standard. Some of them had background of Bhoojan work as well. There were 9 from Koraput District itself.

The curriculum was designed to fall in two main categories, (i) class-room instructions and (ii) field practicals. It was felt desirable to concentrate on class-room training during monsoon when construction activity is generally slack. During fair weather, the trainees were expected to participate in field work when they should join as artisans, as well as

technicians, at the various works in the field. In order to accelerate the training process the programme of training was divided into *short courses necessary for specific jobs*.

This course, expected to create a cadre of skilled artisan-cum-foremen, specialised according to the extent of the practical experience. The course as designed was for a period of one year of which the first six months were to be utilised for class-room instructions.

Though the number of trainees who joined the course was 27, in course of time, it was found difficult to retain this strength on account of certain difficulties experienced in Koraput. There were some who could not adjust well with the malarial climate of the district. Then there were others who could not bear the hardship of field work because of their weak physique. Some of them could not adjust with the austere life as practised by Sarvodaya workers, and few found it hard to adjust with the technical content of the training programme. As such nearly 15 of the 27 trainees left the course without completing the full training period. The remaining 12, after a period of six months, were absorbed in various 'village centres' where works of constructional nature were in progress. The trainees were given a stipend of Rs. 40 per month during the course of first six months and afterwards they were absorbed as probationers on work, drawing a salary not exceeding Rs. 60/- to begin with.

### 3. Agricultural Assistants' Training Course :

In the year 1955, first attempt was made to initiate an orientation course for workers desirous of working in Gramdan villages. In Rayaghada sub-division, at Muniguda, a centre was opened to impart training in basic agriculture, spinning, co-operative organization and Sarvodaya ideology. On 15th August 1955, about 29 trainees joined the course. Government of Orissa through their Tribal and Rural Welfare Department, sanctioned a grant of Rs. 10,000 for this purpose. The training camp afterwards moved on to Kujendri, in the month of September, 1955, when Shri Vinobaji was camping there, and then on to Burja. It continued to be at Burja upto the end of December, 1955, when according to the decisions of Nirman Samiti it was closed, and the workers were absorbed in work started at various 'village centres'.

However, the need of a specialised training course for Agricultural Assistants was not made good by this training. A training course designed to suit agricultural programmes visualised in the project, was organized in the month of September, 1956, at Burja. 21 trainees joined this course. Of these 21, 4 had studied upto Matriculation, 13 had passed middle-school examination, and the remaining had received training only in primary schools. But they were coming from Adivasi areas. There were 9 from Koraput District itself. The course included training in basic agriculture, animal husbandry, soil conservation, agricultural accounting and management of co-operative provision stores. After six months of class-room

instructions these trainees were sent out in the field to participate in regular work and get instructions on field assignments. Out of these 21 trainees, nearly 10 left without completing their course, whereas remaining 11 joined work and continued to remain with the project till the end of 1957.

#### 4. *Orientation Course in Agricultural Engineering :*

On 15th March 1958, a short duration orientation course in agricultural engineering was organized under the able guidance of an Executive Engineer of the Central Water and Power Commission, Government of India, who had joined the project on a long leave of two years. Participants for these courses had come from different provinces, two from Bihar, one from Rajasthan, one from U.P. two from Maharashtra and the remaining 16 from Koraput. The course was divided into two parts. 15 days at Limbaguda on instructions in the field of civil engineering and the remaining 15 days at Garanda on agricultural engineering.

#### 5. *Basic Education Training :*

Nearly 12 trainees from the Bari Basic Education School, Cuttack were drafted in for field work programme as part of basic education training programme organized at another development centre—Deopattangi. However, the climatic extremes of this place could not suit these boys and they had to be shifted to another centre mainly designed for training in animal husbandry, at Gopalwadi. This course was conducted from April 1957 to August, 1958. At Gopalwadi on a plot of 5 acres of land, an effort was made to build a programme of self help for these trainees. They were given Rs. 10/- as stipend and another Rs. 10/- as advances for the work they were doing on land development. The students were expected to return Rs. 10/- after the lands started yielding. It was found little bit hard on those young boys to adjust with this self-help programme. Moreover, they appeared to be disinclined to work on agriculture. As such finally, they were absorbed in a training programme designed to operate Ambar Charkhas in that area.

#### 6. *Ambar training :*

At Jeypore training courses for Ambar Charkhas were organized from January, 1957 onwards. Women from poor families were given 2 months' training. Later on 'Parishamalayas' were organised at Jeypore and Nowrangpur. Nearly 80 persons received training under this scheme. In the year 1958, a batch 7 was sent to Wardha for training on 'Instructors' Course'. Now they are engaged in spreading spinning on Ambar Charkhas even in villages.

#### 7. *Village leaders' training :*

Apart from these regular Training Courses for workers, a special training programme was conducted for villagers who showed initiative

and enterprise. On programmes operated everywhere, opportunities were given to untrained hands and when sufficient motivations were observed, they were sent out to training camps.

*Training camps of short duration* ranging from 2 days to 3 months were organized. Camps with duration not exceeding 7 days were generally organized to break the barriers between various communities on one hand, and between the workers of the Gramdan Project and people on the other. Appeal of love, compassion and service were the main themes which were impressed upon the minds of campers along with the importance and implications of a community living as visualised under Gramdan. The campers used to work for 4 to 6 hours on some earth work project, have common meals and some discourses on Gramdan. These camps were called either 'Gandhi Mela' 'Lok-Sevak Shibir', or 'Bandhu Milan Shibir'. 20 such Shibirs were organized upto the end of 1957, and were attended by nearly 600 people.

#### *Bhoo-Sena Shibir :*

Camps of longer duration were organized as 'Shram Shibir', where campers would undertake to work on a specific project, earn their livelihood and spare some money for their family members. Sarva Seva Sangh had a scheme of subsidising such camps. One of such camps named as 'Bhoo-Sena-Shibir' and conducted at Garanda was a remarkable achievement in the field. Whether villagers could execute local works on contract basis by eliminating contractors, was the problem that confronted local development units. The output of work of an Adivasi labourer is hardly half that of an Andhra labourer. The contractors that way always preferred to have Andhra labourer to Adivasi on earth work. Adivasis were always paid less wages than the outside labourer. It was nobody's business so far to see why the Adivasi fails to put in adequate work. It was seen at this Shibir at Garanda that the output of Adivasi's work increased by nearly 40% within a period of one month, when he was well fed at the camp. He was given able guidance in handling tools by sturdy workers from outside and by the end of 3 months it was observed that he, too, could put up enough work to earn as much as one rupee a day on earthwork like his counterpart from neighbouring plain areas. Of course the output of one rupee was possible, because contractor's margin was not calculated.

Unless and until such concerted efforts at improving his stamina for work and his output of work was made, the Gram Sabha could hardly have succeeded in handling the developmental tasks successfully. Nearly 5 such camps were organized attended by about 180 villagers. Greatest difficulty faced by the Project in undertaking such shibirs on a big scale was non-availability of intelligent workers who had an aptitude for hard manual labour. When one did not labour hard along with

those assembled for the camp, the economic and technical content of such programme was found to be poor.

Recently, at Gopalwadi a 3 months' training camp was organized from 1st August, 1958 for local Adivasi workers. 78 workers inclusive of 6 Instructors engaged in Bhoojan Vichar Prasar participated in this camp. Trainees were divided in 3 grades according to their performance in the field of literacy. They were given orientation in Co-operative organization, Legal measures designed to protect Adivasi interest, Social Hygiene, Basic Arithmetic, Compost-making and such other relevant matters to village work. As part of practicals programme these campers reclaimed a 5 acre plot for agriculture. Curriculum included spinning as well. Apart from these various camps, promising young Adivasi boys (about 20) were recruited for apprenticeship training at the Demonstration Centres. They were given stipends ranging from Rs. 15 to 25 a month and absorbed in work later on.

At Garanda, a new scheme of terracing the fields was operated by mobilizing the village labour, and an area of nearly 40 acres was thus reclaimed. The plots were laid of equal size (of 10 cents each). It was noticed that this programme had a greater appeal to villagers than the contour bunding programme. The zig-zag of contour bunds was not much to the liking of Adivasi. Moreover the idea of equal size plots appealed to them most, since that way they could measure the size of their holdings. This type of work was spreading in the surrounding area on its own momentum. People coming out in early morning hour, and recasting their field on Garanda Model, was a common sight then. In order to show 'people in action' to villagers from other areas, *a programme of excursions was arranged*, and within 2 months nearly 100 promising villagers from about 10 centres were actually taken round the work site. Many of them stayed there over a period of 5 to 7 days and participated in work. Later on in a number of cases the programme was emulated by villagers with initial technical guidance.

With all that transpired in the field of training, it could well be surmised that nothing like practical demonstration, succeeded in putting the people to work on development projects; and secondly the language that could effectively translate ideas into practice for the Adivasis was the language of Labour. It was only by doing things along with them that improvements in their methods of work were achieved. Thirdly it was found that no programme of improvements in techniques of work was going to materialise in this area as long as proper feeding arrangements for these villagers were not ensured. Maybe for a time subsidised wage was the only answer to put them on the path of more and efficient work.

The project has so far incurred an expenditure of Rs. 63,868; on training the workers, and Rs. 18,070 on training the village leaders respectively. Nearly 77 workers received training after they joined work; and about 200 village leaders or local workers passed through orientation programmes.

## *Chapter IV*

### **NATURE OF DISTRIBUTION OF GRAMDAN LANDS**

#### **1. General :**

By the time Shri Vinobaji left Koraput, nearly 605 villages had declared Gramdan. This process continued till the beginning of 1957 with increased enthusiasm; and by March that year, the number of Gramdans reached 1500. However, the attitude of the State Government and the delays it meant in verification of donation and distribution deeds, and the subsequent delays in organization of follow-up programmes for rehabilitation of landless persons, were causing incalculable harm to the smooth progress of the movement. These delays, not only obstructed the smooth transfer of donated lands to the hands of landless people, but also created insurmountable difficulties in front of these communities in securing agricultural credit.

It was seen that the delays involved in legal procedures were not of a casual character. Evidently the only alternative left before the Bhoojan workers, in that case, was to concentrate on solving these difficulties before attempting any further expansion. Accordingly in June 1957, a decision was taken to call a halt to further expansion of Gramdan and priority was given to finalising the legal procedures as laid down in the Orissa Bhoojan Yagna Act, as amended in 1956.

This decision, actually, followed a similar one regarding distribution of lands. The former decision was taken in the month of May that year. According to this decision no further programme of distribution of land was to be undertaken till the distribution papers of already distributed villages were finally disposed off by the concerned Revenue Authorities. Distribution without proper legal follow-up had actually meant total mismanagement of land resulting in fall in production. It created problems in front of donors for payment of revenue. Neither the grantees could pay it in the absence of effective possession, nor the donors were willing to bear the burden.

The following paragraphs, state what actually had happened till June 1957, with regard to donations and redistribution of Gramdan lands.

#### **2. Gramdan Villages (A)\***

##### ***Size of donated villages :***

Out of a total of 1500 Gramdan villages, in about 756, redistribution of land had already been completed by June 1957. The remaining

\* 'A' denotes Gramdan Villages where land distribution is not yet over.

744 where land distribution was not undertaken, represented 104,515 acres of land donated by 9,828 donors. The following table gives a broad classification of these villages by acreage of donated land. Except for declaration of Gramdan made by villagers, in the form prescribed by the Bhoodan Act, no further activities were undertaken in these villages.

TABLE No. 5.  
Gramdan Villages (A) Classified by Acreage of donated land

Size of the donated land	Upto 100 acres	Between 100 & 200 acres	Between 200 & 300 acres	Between 300 & 400 acres	Between 400 & 500 acres	500 acres & above	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Villages	405	181	78	37	17	26	744
Percent	54.44	24.33	10.48	4.97	2.29	3.49	100.00

The percentage of smaller villages though it appears comparatively bigger in the above Table, compares favourably with the overall picture of Koraput habitation. It should be noted here that in Koraput nearly 1/5th of the total number of villages have less than 50 population each. Moreover these villages represent Revenue villages and not hamlets as in the case of Gramdans.

The villages received in Gramdan were widely distributed all over the district with small clusters here and there. Out of 33 Police Stations, nearly 28 had responded to the call of Gramdan. Broadly speaking, after September 1956, Gramdan Movement had spread into 8 new Police Station areas. The following table gives an indication of how the expansion of Gramdan was taking shape in different areas by the beginning of 1957. The Police Station areas concerned are classified under three different groups according to response received to the call of Gramdan.

#### *Area-wise Spread of Gramdan :*

Group I represents Gramdan upto 20 per cent of the total number of villages; whereas Group II represents between 21 and 40 per cent and Group III represents 41 per cent and above.

In early 1957, the 5 Police Station areas classified as Group III were accepted as areas for intensive Bhoodan work, where beginning with entire Gram Panchayat areas, Gramdans were to spread to total Police Station areas, thereby converting these pockets into complete Gramdan areas.

However, for reasons already mentioned above, this programme was abandoned after 3-4 months.

TABLE No. 6.

S. No.	Name of the Police Station area.	Total No. of villages in the Police Station	No. of Gramdan villages	Percentage of Gramdan villages to total
1	2	3	4	5
<b>GROUP — I</b>				
1.	Umerkote	234	35	15%
2.	Jharigan	157	24	15%
3.	Bissumcuttack	418	63	15%
4.	Padua	453	75	16%
5.	Padmapur	79	13	17%
6.	Rayagada	420	80	19%
Total		1761	290	16.47
<b>GROUP — II</b>				
1.	Mattili	163	34	21%
2.	Pottangi	347	80	23%
3.	Nandpur	260	60	23%
4.	Lakshmipur	162	40	25%
5.	Gunupur	184	47	26%
6.	Boipariguda	193	51	27%
7.	Kalyansinpur	164	48	28%
8.	Semaliguda	122	42	34%
9.	Koraput	216	85	39%
Total		1811	487	26.9
<b>GROUP — III</b>				
1.	Narayanapatna	276	117	42%
2.	Gudari	304	170	56%
3.	Ambodola	140	80	57%
4.	Dasmantpur	212	138	65%
5.	Dabugan	92	59	65%
Total		1024	564	55.08

### 3. Gramdan Villages (B)\*

#### *Nature of Distribution :*

Particulars of distribution with regard to the 756 villages, concerning number of families involved in the process of donation and distribution, the acreage that passed on to the hands of landless families and their number; the distribution of land as between individual cultivation and community cultivation and the like is presented under Appendix B. It would be seen from this statement that nearly 329 Gramdan villages were having more than 20 families each. The total land donated and afterwards redistributed either for individual cultivation or retained for community cultivation, was of the size of 1,12,058 acres, of which 93,610 acres (nearly 83.5 per cent of the total) was allotted for individual cultivation, and 2762 acres or 2.5 per cent of the total was retained as a pool of 'Community Land' to be cultivated jointly on voluntary basis. The land which remained undistributed as cultivable waste land was of the size of 15,686 acres (nearly 14.00 per cent of the total). The number of families involved in donation and distribution of land in these villages was 16,075, with a population of 1,04,206. Of these 16,075 families, 4,205 families (nearly 26.1 per cent of the total) consisting of 18,899 persons, represented the landless population, who secured land under Gramdan redistribution. The land that actually passed on to these landless families was of the size of, 11,600 acres (nearly 12.03 per cent of the total distributed land). The following two tables give a broad classification of these villages by the size of donated land (inclusive of community land): and by the number of families residing in them respectively.

TABLE No. 7.  
Gramdan Villages (B) classified by size of  
donated land (inclusive of Community land)

Size of the donated land	Upto 100 acres	Between 100 & 200 acres	Between 200 & 300 acres	Between 300 & 400 acres	Between 400 & 500 acres	500 acres & above	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Villages	397	170	80	59	27	23	756
Percentage to the total	52.53	22.48	10.58	7.80	3.57	3.04	100.00

\* 'B' denotes Gramdan Villages where land distribution was over by June, 1957.

TABLE No. 8.

Gramdan Villages (B) classified by number of families residing in the village who formed part of Gramdan Community.

No. of households	Below 10	Between 10 & 20	Above 20	Total	
	1	2	3	4	5
Villages	177	250	329	756	
Percentage to the total	23.41	33.07	43.52	100.00	

*Per capita availability of land :*

The 'District Average' of per capita availability of cultivable land comes to 1.15 acres. The availability of cultivable land for these 756 Gramdan villages compares quite favourably with the general picture of the district as a whole. In certain Police Station areas like the Padwa Police Station, the pressure of population is excessively heavy (nearly 400 per sq. mile) where its effects on availability of land are adverse. In certain other areas, though the pressure of population is low, the availability of cultivable land is equally poor for reasons of excessive forest areas. Table No. 10 classifies the villages by per capita availability of cultivable land. Nearly 44% of the villages had more than 1 acre per capita land available as cultivated land. Remaining 56% below 1 acre represent greater proportion of Gramdans from areas where per capita availability of cultivable land was already below 1 acre.

TABLE No. 9.

Gramdan Villages (B) classified by per capita availability of cultivable land.

By availability of cultivable land	With 2 acres & above	Between 1 & 2 acres	Between 1 & $\frac{1}{2}$ acres	Below $\frac{1}{2}$ acre	Total
	1	2	3	4	5
Villages	85	245	289	137	756
Percentage to the total	11.23	32.49	38.18	18.10	100.00

*Land to the landless :*

As is already mentioned, the 4,205 landless families which constitute nearly 26% of the total, received land under Gramdan redistribu-

tion. The proportion of landless families to the total, exceeds 25 per cent in nearly 339 villages (44 per cent of the total number of villages). At the other extreme there were 147 villages where no landless family existed at all. In the latter case redistribution of land meant, in actual practice, progressive equalisation of land holdings. Table No. 10 gives a broad classification of these villages by number of erstwhile landless families.

TABLE No. 10.  
Gramdan Villages (B) Classified by proportion  
of erstwhile landless\* families to total.

By proportion of erstwhile land- less families to total	Without any landless prior to Gramdan		With less than 5%		Between 5 & 15%		Between 15 & 25%		Between 25 & 50%		With 50% above		Total	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
Villages	147	15	141	113	248	91	755							
Percentage to the total	19.47	1.99	18.68	14.97	32.84	12.05	100.00							

\* Note :—Here the term landless is used to denote those who did not own lands — inclusive of those who were not even cultivators before.

#### Community Land :

As is already mentioned above, total acreage earmarked as Community land was of the size of 2762 acres (2.5% of the total). No doubt, Community land formed a major plank in inculcating community consciousness in these Gramdan communities. But as the distribution of land was left over to the initiative and conscience of the villagers themselves, in number of cases, the villagers have not earmarked any community land whatsoever under redistribution. It could be attributed either to lack of sufficient understanding about the concept of community pool of land in the sphere of land management, or to the dearth of land itself. In majority of cases, latter reason represents the fact. Table No. 11 gives a broad classification of the villages by the size of community land earmarked under redistribution. It would be seen that nearly 42% of the villages did not have community land. (It has been seen above that nearly 56% of the villages had per capita land less than 1 acre).

TABLE No. 11.

Gramdan Villages (B) classified by size of Community land earmarked under Gramdan land —distribution.

Proportion of community land to total	Villages without any community	With community land upto 5% of the total	Between 5 & 15%		With 15% & above	Total	
			1	2	3	4	5
Villages	318	289	134	15	756		
Percent	42.06	38.23	17.73	1.98	100.00		

*Effects of Land Distribution :*

As regards effects of land distribution on size of holdings, and on the ratio of largest to smallest holding, an appraisal has been made separately under Chapter V. It was observed that the original ratio of 1:14 was altered to 1:7 under Gramdan in the later case. Nearly 22.55 per cent of the total donated land was actually transferred in the process of redistribution, thereby affecting 42.8 per cent of the total number of holdings. Nearly 6.5 per cent of the holdings below 1 acre, and nearly 7.3 per cent of the holdings above 7 acres were altogether eliminated and added to the middle group of 1 to 7 acres.

## Chapter V

### LAND DISTRIBUTION-ITS EFFECT ON SIZE OF HOLDING

Data pertaining to 100 Gramdan Villages (B) was analysed with a view to observe the trend in size of holdings consequent to redistribution of land. For purposes of this analysis, villages were selected on principles of random sampling — roughly 5 villages from each Police-Station area; and the holdings were classified as followed by Settlement Records in Orissa.

The villages under study covered an area of 18,636 acres of cultivated land, and were inhabited by 18,878 persons, comprising of 2838 households. Land earmarked as Community Land under Gramdan redistribution consisted of 612 acres, and Land in the category of cultivable waste which was not distributed to individual cultivators and which was of the size of 1970.87 acres, was not included in the said analysis. Evidently the term holding, here, meant cultivated area under individual family farms.

There were 2238 such holdings in these 100 villages prior to Gramdan. Gramdan redistribution meant a net addition of 600 holdings. Bulk of these additions being in the group of 1 to 7 acres, as is seen in the following table.

TABLE No. 12.

Group No.	Size of Holdings	NUMBER OF HOLDINGS			
		(A) amdan		(B) After Gramdan re-distribution	
		Holdings	Percent of total	Holdings	Percent of total
I	Upto 1 acre	304	12.59	158	5.57
II	Between 1 & 7 acres	1022	45.70	1932	68.07
III	7 acres and above	912	40.71	748	26.36
	Total	2238	100.00	2838	100.00

(For more details see Table No. 14)

Nearly 47% of the total reductions were from the first group, whereas remaining 53% came from the third group. The distribution affected at both ends in the negative; whereas in the centre it was positive. Nearly 910 holdings thus were added to the middle group, reducing 146 from

the first and 164 from the last (nearly 6.5 and 7.3 per cent of the total respectively.)

Of the 748 holdings remaining in the last group, only 206 were above 15 acres, of which nearly 17 were allotted to joint families comprising of members ranging between 79 in the maximum and 15 in the minimum. Thus holdings available for further redistribution in order to balance the middle group for fairly good subsistence holdings, were only of the order of 180 which is about 6% of the total holdings today. Other contributing factor to this balance was the pool of cultivable waste land which was of the size of 1970 acres nearly 10.5% of the total donated land.

In this District there is no comparable data available, pointing towards the rate of fragmentation and the trend it has set in over past few decades. Mobility of population which is a characteristic feature of this area has checked, to a considerable extent, the rate of fragmentation. But again the very fact of mobility has adversely affected agricultural economy of this terrian. Present condition of holdings in the District, however, is given under the following table. It refers to only such areas where survey and settlement is over.

*General picture of the District :*

TABLE No. 13.  
Land holdings in Koraput District (General)  
classified by various sizes.

Size of Holdings	Number of Holdings	Percentage of the total — Holdings	
		1	2
Upto 1 acre	27,932		16.6%
Between 1 and 2 acres	20,421		12.1%
"    2 and 3 "	16,026		9.5%
"    3 and 4 "	12,820		7.6%
"    4 and 5 "	10,687		6.3%
"    5 and 7 "	16,740		9.9%
"    7 and 15 "	35,555		21.1%
"    15 and 33 "	21,483		12.7%
"    33 and 50 "	4,176		2.4%
"    50 and 100 "	1,747		1.04%
"    100 and above	316		8.38%
Total	1,67,903		

(Source of information : Settlement Office.)

*Comparative picture of Gramdan holdings :*

A detailed analysis of the data of 100 Gramdan villages in question is given under Table No. 14.

Classification of Holdings in 100 Gramdan Villages (B) selected at random (5 Villages from each Police Station).

## A—Prior to Gramdan

## B—After Gramdan land distribution

Sr. No.	Size of the Holdings	(A)				(B)				The variation between A & B.				Remarks.	
		Prior to Gramdan	After Gramdan Distribution	Additions	Reductions	By No. of Holdings	By No. of Holdings	Precentage of Holdings	Precentage of Holdings	By No. of Holdings	By No. of Holdings	Precentage of Holdings	Precentage of Holdings	Reduction of Holdings	Reduction of Holdings
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7	8	9	9	10	10	11	11	11
1.	Upto 1 Acre	304	13.59	158	5.57	—	—	—	—	146	47.08	—	—	Classification of size of land holdings adopted on the pattern as laid down under Table No. 13.	
2.	Between 1 & 2 acres	252	11.26	497	17.51	245	26.93	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3.	Between 2 & 3 acres	213	9.52	451	15.89	238	26.16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4.	Between 3 & 4 acres	168	7.52	351	12.27	183	20.10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5.	Between 4 & 5 acres	157	7.03	278	9.80	121	13.29	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6.	Between 5 & 7 acres	232	10.37	355	12.51	123	13.52	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7.	Between 7 & 15 acres	569	25.43	542	19.09	—	—	—	—	27	8.72	—	—	—	—
8.	Between 15 & 33 acres	274	12.25	172	6.06	—	—	—	—	102	32.90	—	—	—	—
9.	Between 33 to 50 acres	53	2.37	26	0.92	—	—	—	—	27	8.72	—	—	—	—
10.	Between 50 to 100 acres	15	0.66	8	0.28	—	—	—	—	7	2.26	—	—	—	—
11.	100 and above	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	0.32	—	—	—	—
Total		2238	100.00	2838	100.00	910	100.00	310	100.00	—	—	—	—	—	—
														Net addition of holdings—600.	

## Chapter VI

### FAMILIES AND HOLDINGS AS AFFECTED BY GRAMDAN LAND DISTRIBUTION

Data pertaining to a further group of 100 Gramdan villages (B) was analysed with a view to observe the :—

- (i) Actual transfer of land from one hand to another in the process of Gramdan land distribution;
- (ii) The number of holdings that were reduced in size in this process;
- (iii) The number of families benefited by the process; and
- (iv) The size of smallest and largest holding as it was affected by land distribution.

For purposes of this analysis villages were selected on principle of random sampling — every 7th village on the Gramdan Register.

The villages under study covered an area of 12,395 acres of cultivated land; and were inhabited by 2159 families. The number of total holdings during pre-Gramdan period which was 1531, was increased to 2159 as a result of Gramdan land distribution, meaning thereby a net increase of 628 new holdings. Of these 1531 holdings, 655 (nearly 42.8 per cent of total) were actually reduced in size in the process of land distribution. This reduction involved a total transfer of land of the size of 2796 acres out of a total of 12,395 acres of donated land in Gramdan, which meant nearly 22.55 per cent of the total land. The following table gives a further classification of these villages by proportion of holdings reduced in size, consequent to land distribution, to total holdings of the villages. In about 41% villages more than 50% of the total holdings were reduced in size under redistribution.

TABLE No. 15.

100 Gramdan Villages (B) classified by proportion of holdings reduced in size consequent to land distribution to total holdings of the village.

By proportion of holdings reduced in size to total	With less than 5% of the holdings reduced in size	Between 5 & 15%	Between 15 & 25%	Between 25 & 50%	Between 50 & 75%	75% & above	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Villages	—	2	8	49	31	10	100
Per cent	—	2.00	8.00	49.00	31.00	10.00	100.00

The average maximum holding during pre-Gramdan period was 22.85 acres as against 14.49 after Gramdan land distribution. Whereas the average minimum holding prior to Gramdan was of the size of 1.54 acres as against 2.08 after Gramdan land distribution. Joint families in Nowrangpur sub-division are mainly responsible for the present difference of 1 : 7. Table No. 16, classifies these villages by proportion of land that actually transferred hands under Gramdan land distribution, to the total land available for redistribution in a village. In nearly 45% of the villages more than 25% of total land has actually transferred hands.

*Actual transfer of land under distribution :*

TABLE No. 16.

100 Gramdan Villages (B) classified by proportion of land that actually transferred hands under Gramdan land distribution, to the total land available for redistribution in a village.

By proportion of land that actually transferred hand	With less than 5%	Between 5 & 15%	Between 15 & 25%	Between 25 & 50%	Between 50 & 75%	75% & above	Total
	1	2	3	4	5	5	
Villages	2	23	30	33	7	5	100
Per cent	2.00	23.00	30.00	33.00	7.00	5.00	100.00

The following table gives a broad classification of the villages by the proportion of minimum to maximum holdings prior to Gramdan as compared with those of after Gramdan land distribution.

TABLE No. 17.

100 Gramdan Villages classified by the ratio of size of largest holding to smallest one.

By ratio of size of largest to smallest holding	Up to 1.33	Between 1.33 to 2	Between 2 to 4	Between 4 to 6.6	Between 6.6 to 20	Above 20	Total
	1	12	12	24	51	100	
In Pre-Gramdan Villages	1	12	12	24	51	100	
In Post-Gramdan Villages	4	9	27	20	27	13	100

## *Chapter VII*

### **WHAT HAPPENED TO DISTRIBUTED LAND ?**

Most of the work in redistribution of donated land under Gramdan was undertaken during the year 1956. First quarter of 1957 also was devoted to this task. Since then no redistribution was attempted. More than two years have elapsed since then. During this period not a single distribution paper was attested or verified by the Revenue authorities. No legal sanction, therefore, foreclosed on the distributed lands. What happened to this land that was distributed more than two years ago, was of great significance to the general assessment of the Gramdan movement.

#### *Enquiry:*

In order to find out the present condition of distributed land (land that actually transferred hands under redistribution) with regard to its possession, an enquiry was conducted during the months of July and August 1959. Nearly 30 villages were covered by this enquiry; and the villages covered were chosen to suit the following 3 categories:—

- (i) Villages where intensive development programmes were undertaken;
- (ii) Villages where programmes of only bullock distribution and disbursement of Rural Credit were undertaken, and—
- (iii) Villages where no follow-up whatsoever was undertaken.

15 villages from first two categories and another 15 from the third one were studied. The findings of this enquiry are given below. List of the villages under enquiry is appended towards the end of this chapter.

#### *First Group of Villages :*

This enquiry was conducted in 10 Gramdan villages where intensive development programmes were undertaken. Another factor that determined selection of these villages was monsoon and inaccessibility caused thereby. Except for one village which was donated as Gramdan in the month of August, 1956, the rest of the villages under enquiry had declared Gramdan in the year 1955. Similarly, in all the villages except the one mentioned above land distribution was over in the year 1956. The enquiry conducted covered a fortnight ending 15th September, 1959.

The villages under enquiry covered a population of 2,750 consisting of 372 families of which 104 were erstwhile landless. In all these villages total land owned by cultivators was donated, and size of the land, thus, donated was 3071.81 acres. The nature of land distribution after Gramdan and the land that actually transferred, as a result of this distribution to new hands is given below under Table No. 18.

TABLE No. 18.  
Nature of Distribution of land.  
(10 Villages)

Total No. of families	Participation of families						Actual transfer of land			
	Landed	Landless	Families that parted with land under distribution	Families that secured land under distribution	Total No. of families affected either way by distribution	Total donated land under Gramdan	Total land that actually transferred from one hand to another	Nature of Transfer	Community land	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
372	268	104	142	146	288	3071.81	647.07	590.02	57.05	
100%	72%	28%	52%	39%	77%	100%	21%	19.2%	1.8%	

Of the 273 landed families 142 (nearly 52 per cent) parted with part of their land under distribution in favour of 146 families (nearly 39 per cent. of the total), who were either erstwhile landless or marginal land-holders. The distribution of land after Gramdan had not affected at all 137 families (nearly 36.00 per cent of the total). Out of 3071.81 acres of donated land, 647.07 acres (or nearly 21 per cent of the total donated land) actually transferred hands in the process of redistribution under Gramdan.

On the day of enquiry, it was observed that out of 647.07 acres of land that actually transferred under distribution, 579.76 acres has remained in the same possession as under Gramdan Distribution Deed. 0.98 acres was in doubtful possession, whereas 66.33 acres has reverted back to the original donors. The reverted land originally belonged to 27 donors (18 per cent of the total). The present condition of land with regard to its possession is given under table No. 19.

Of the land allotted for individual cultivation which was of the size of 590.02 acres according to the distribution deed 532.62 has continued to remain in the same possession. 0.98 was in doubtful possession whereas 56.42 had reverted.

Of the land earmarked as Community land under Distribution Deed which was of the size of 57.05, 47.14 had continued to remain in the same possession; whereas 9.91 acres have been reverted. Thus the reverted land constitutes 1.5 per cent of the land that actually transferred hands.

The land in doubtful possession, as found in the enquiry, represents the land left unoccupied by original donor in favour of grantees but never occupied by grantees.

TABLE No. 19.

Present condition of distributed land with regard to its possession.

Present condition of land with regard to its possession	Transferred land as allotted for individual cultivation	Variation	Transferred land as retained for community cultivation	Variation	Total of Col. 2 & 4		Variation
					1	2	
<b>Land that actually transferred</b>							
	590.02	100.00%	57.05	100.00%	647.07	100.00%	
Land now in — actual possession of Grantees	532.62	90.3%	47.14	82.4%	579.76	89.50%	
Land now in doubtful possession of Grantees	0.98	1.7%	—	—	0.98	0.15%	
Land now — reverted back to the original donors	56.42	9.00%	9.91	17.6%	66.33	10.35%	

*Second Group:*

This enquiry was conducted in 5 Gramdan villages where instead of intensive development work only programmes of distribution of bullock and disbursement of rural credit were undertaken as part of Gramdan follow-up.

Except for one village which was donated in 1954 rest of the villages had declared Gramdan in the year 1955. Similarly, except for one village where land distribution was undertaken in 1955 the rest of the villages had completed land distribution programme by September 1956.

The villages under enquiry covered a population of 509, consisting of 79 families of which 35 were erstwhile landless. In all these villages, total land owned by cultivators was donated and the area, thus, donated was of the size of 573.63 acres. The nature of land distribution after Gramdan and the land that actually transferred, as a result of this distribution to new hands is given below under Table No. 20.

TABLE NO. 20.  
Nature of Distribution of Land  
(5 Villages)

Participation of families					Actual transfer of land				
Total No. of families	Landed	Landless	Families that parted with land under — distribution	Families that secured land under distribution	Total No. of families affected either way under distribution	Total donated land under Gramdan	Total land that actually transferred from one hand to another	Nature of transfer	For Community cultivation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
79	44	35	33	43	76	573.63	211.47	195.62	15.85
100%	57.7%	42.3%	41.8%	54.4%	96.2%	100.00%	36.8%	34.1%	2.7%

Of the 44 landed families 33 (nearly 96.2 per cent of the total landed families) had parted with part of their lands under distribution, in favour of 43 families (nearly 54.4 per cent of the total number of families), who were either landless or marginal landholders. Only 3 families (nearly 3.8% of total) were not affected by the redistribution in land after Gramdan. Out of 573.63 acres of donated land, 211.47 (nearly 36.8 per cent of the total donated land) actually transferred hands in the process of redistribution. On the day of enquiry it was observed that out of 211.47 acres of land that was actually transferred, 153.36 (72.57 per cent) continued to remain in the same possession as under Gramdan Distribution Deed; 54.71 acres (26.07 per cent of the total transferred land) was in doubtful possession; whereas only 3.40 acres (1.42% of the total transferred land) had reverted back to the original donors. Present condition of the land with regard to its possession is given under table No. 21.

Of the land allotted for individual cultivation which was of the size of 195.62 acres, 139.49 (71.4 per cent) has continued to remain in the same possession. 54.13 acres (27.5 per cent) was in doubtful possession. Of these 54.13 acres of land lying in doubtful possession, 52.33 acres represents a peculiar case from one village. Here out of 12 landless families who secured land, one person died, another 6 families migrated to other villages and settled elsewhere. Land in their names was lying uncultivated on the day of enquiry. Neither the original donor nor the new Gramsabha was paying land revenue for this plot of land for the last 2 years. The possession of the same land has been regarded as doubtful possession in the findings. The land that was actually reverted was only 2 acres (1.1 per cent).

TABLE No. 21.

Present condition of distributed land with regard to its possession (5 Villages).

Present condition of land with regard to its possession	Transferred land as allotted for individual cultivation		Transferred land as retained for community cultivation		Total of Col. 2 and 4	Variation
	1	2	3	4		
Transferred land as per distribution	195.62	100.00	15.85	100.00	211.47	100.00
Land now in actual possession of Grantees	139.49	71.4%	13.87	87.5%	153.36	72.51
Land now in doubtful possession of Grantees	54.13	27.5%	0.58	3.6%	54.71	26.07
Land now — reverted back to the original donors	2.00	1.1%	1.40	8.8%	3.40	1.42

Of the land earmarked as community land under Distribution Deed, which was 15.85 acres, 13.87 acres (nearly 87.5% of total) have continued to remain in the same possession; whereas 0.58 acres were found to be in doubtful possession; and only 1.40 acres have been actually reverted which constitutes only 1.42% of the total transferred land.

### *Third Group :*

This inquiry was conducted in 15 Gramdan villages—5 from each sub-division. Villages selected for this inquiry were only of such category as would satisfy the following two conditions:—

- where redistribution of land is over; and where, at least, a period of one year has elapsed since;
- where no follow-up of whatsoever type was undertaken by Sarva Seva Sangh.

Besides these two conditions, dislocations caused by monsoon also influenced the selection.

In none of these villages redistribution of land has been undertaken later than 17-4-1957, the earliest being on 23-1-1956. The gap between

Gramdan declaration and land distribution was four months on an average. However, in two extreme cases it was one day in one; and 237 days in the other. The latter case represents a Gramdan of September, 1955. Latest Gramdan declared amongst these 15 villages was on 15-3-1957. The inquiry was conducted over a fortnight ending 20th July, 1959.

None of these villages had received any help towards rehabilitation or development purposes. Obviously almost all villages gave expression to a common grievance that though lands were given to them, no means of cultivation were provided and as such the purpose of distribution was nullified.

The inquiry involved in all 652 families out of which 30% were erstwhile landless and the remaining 70% consisted of marginal landholders and landed families. The cropped area covered by these villages represented 3474 acres which was all donated by 457 donors.

Under redistribution, out of 3474 acres of donated land, 660 acres or nearly 19% of the total, remained transferred from one hand to another. Out of which 143 acres had passed on to marginal landholders and the remaining 517 was distributed amongst erstwhile landless and Community land.—446 and 71 acres respectively.

TABLE No. 22.  
Nature of Distribution of Land.  
(15 Villages)

Participation of families					Actual transfer of land				
Total No. of families	Landed	Landless	Families that parted with land under distribution	Families that secured land under distribution	Total No. of families that affected — either way under distribution	Total donated land under Gramdan	Total land that actually transferred hands under distribution	For Individual cultivation	Nature of transfer
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
652	457	195	192	338	530	3474	660	589	71
100%	70%	30%	42.01%	51.8%	81.2%	100.00%	18.9%	14.08%	4.82%

On the day of inquiry it was observed that out of 660 acres of transferred land, 367 acres (55.6%) continued to remain with the same grantees as under Gramdan distribution; whereas the remaining 293 acres (44.4%) has been reverted back to the possession of original donors.

Of these 293 acres of reverted land, 213 acres (nearly 43%) represent a case of possession wrongfully entered in the name of donors

by Survey and Settlement during their 'Khanapuri' operation, which were conducted after land distribution in this area. During the course of these operations, the 'Amins' misinformed the villagers stating that unless the land was recorded in the name of the donor, it would go back to the Government. (This incident took place during the July-September 1957 period of a general setback to Gramdan Movement in this District). As a result, entire transferred land (213 acres) of these villages was recorded in the name of donors and consequently remained reverted. If this figure is deducted from the total reverted land, actually only 80 acres (12%) stand reverted in the real sense. Of these 80 acres, again, 69 acres (10.4%) were reverted for reasons of lack of interest in cultivation on the part of grantees; and only 11 acres (1.6%) on account of change of mind of the donors.

TABLE No. 23.

Present condition of distributed land with regard to its possession.

Present condition regarding possession	Transferred land as allotted for individual cultivation	Variation	Transferred land as retained for community cultivation	Variation	Total transferred land under distribution	Variation
1	2	3	4	5	5	7
<b>Land that actually transferred, as per distribution</b>						
589		100.00%	71	100.00%	660	100.00%
<b>Land now in actual possession of Grantees</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>57.3%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>55.6%</b>
<b>Land now in doubtful possession</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>36.1%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>32.2%</b>
<b>Land now reverted back to original donor</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>54.9%</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>12.1%</b>

As regards the land remaining under same possession viz. 367 acres, 29 acres represented land reserved for Community pool, and the remaining 338 was under individual allotment. Of these 367 acres, 267 acres were under cultivation during last agricultural season whereas the remaining 100 acres were lying uncultivated mainly for want of means of cultivation and only in one or two cases for negligence on the part of the grantee.

As regards cultivation of Community Lands 10 out of 29 acres were under cultivation during the last agricultural season and the rest lay uncultivated.

The bulk of the land that stands now reverted, it appeared, will pass on to the hands of the grantees once again, provided adequate provisions of means of cultivation were made. Some of the donors have already expressed their desire to abide by their previous pledge, whereas some of the grantees have filed 'objections' to the Settlement Records about the wrongful entries made therein.

*List of the villages where enquiry concerning the possession of land that was distributed two years back was conducted, findings of which are incorporated under chapter VII.*

Sr.No.	Name of the village	Police Station area
1	2	3

#### GROUP I.

1	Melkajuba	K. Singpur
2	Garanda	Gunupur
3	Sarupadu	Gudari
4	Shrikhandi	Gudari
5	Deopottangi	Pottangi
6	Kharagpur	Nandpur
7	Koilari	Dabugaon
8	Ramanaguda	Dabugaon
9	Haldiguda	Dabugaon
10	Bijapur	Dabugaon

#### GROUP II.

1	Kamalpadu	Gudari
2	Baunsguda	Pottangi
3	Dumuriguda	Pottangi
4	Chhelibeda	Dabugaon
5	Chhotaguda	Dabugaon

#### GROUP III.

1	Bishnuguda	Rayaghada
2	Padi	Rayaghada
3	Badakhal	Rayaghada
4	Pansahi	Rayaghada
5	Kodesu	Rayaghada
6	Ramjiput *	Narayanpatana
7	Sanamatur *	N. Patana
8	Badamatur *	N. Patana

Sr.No.	Name of the village	Police Station area
1	2	3
9	Mundiguda *	N. Patana
10	Chintluguda *	N. Patana
11	Talagan	Jharigan
12	Talakanavi and Tarabeda	Jharigan
13	Deurukona	Jharigan
14	Sandas	Jharigan
15	Sinuaguda	Jharigan

\* Five villages where during 'Khanapuri operations' the Survey Settlement wrongfully entered the land in the names of original donors.

## *Chapter VIII*

### **DEVELOPMENT WORK AND GRAMSABHAS**

#### **1. *Gram-Samitis and Gram Sabhas :***

In Gramdan villages immediately after declaration of Gramdan a 'Gram Samiti' used to be formed composed of all adult members, to deal with redistribution of land. Such 8 to 10 Gram Samitis, afterwards were grouped together to form into a 'Gram Sabha'. A Gram Sabha, on an average, would represent 150 to 200 families in an area of about 3 miles radius. The Gram Sabha in fact was the single village institution which dealt with all aspects of community life. It was Panchayat as well as a co-operative unto itself. In fact, invariably in all cases the Gram Sabhas came into being initially to perform economic functions. Apart from the fact that all property rights in land were supposed to be legally vested in Gram Sabha; and that management of land was to be a direct responsibility entrusted on these bodies, management of co-operative stores, provision of credit and such other functions of a co-operative society were handled by these Gram Sabhas. The integration of Co-operative institutions with Gram Sabha was deemed necessary in order to avoid multiplicity of institutions at village level.

In most of the cases management of community land and collection of share capital for stores, became the immediate responsibilities of Gram Sabhas, soon after land redistribution. The centres of Gram Sabhas, thus, organized in Koraput are marked on the Distribution list. There were 58 such units operating by the end of 1958.

In Adivasi communities calling frequent meetings of all adult members was a routine affair. However, when it came to convening meetings of villagers from surrounding hamlets, it could not be as frequent. In that way the local 'Gram Samitis' used to look after the day-to-day problems. What was new in the concept of Gram Sabha was the integration of economic functions. But these additional functions appeared to be beyond their existing skills. Consequently a training programme to train the village leadership for new assignments was undertaken. (This aspect of training the village leaders is dealt with separately under Chapter on Training.)

The Gram Sabhas were given subsidy for construction of a Community House (Kucha), for a drinking water well, for tanks, construction of approach roads; construction of stores, for bicycles, office furniture, etc. In certain key centres, "Gandhi Ghars" also were constructed wherein provision for a common meeting hall, community work-shed, store-house or godown was made. A loan programme as worked out through these

Gramsabhas independent of Marketing Section, is presented under Chapter on Development of Co-operative Organization.

Since, mostly illiterate villagers used to operate these Gramsabhas, records concerning their minutes of meeting etc. were not maintained. With the help of S. S. S. workers they were keeping accounts of financial transactions, and distribution of lands. These records are maintained by Sarva Seva Sangh and Bhoodan Yagna Samiti respectively.

## 2. *Rehabilitation of Landless :*

Besides this, the Gram Sabhas were squarely responsible for rehabilitation of landless families. This was the biggest item of work they were engaged in. Subsequent paragraphs deal with the nature and size of the problem and the services that were rendered to alleviate the same.

As it has been already mentioned, there were nearly 4,200 landless families involving a population of 19,000 awaiting rehabilitation on land. Land that was passed on to these families under Gramdan Land Distribution was of the size of 11,600 acres. However, the actual problem of rehabilitation included the marginal landholders as well, who were of the size of 35 to 36 per cent of the total landed families. This meant that the rehabilitation programme was touching nearly 55 to 60 per cent of the total families from these villages.

The problem of rehabilitation was actually two-fold in nature. On the one hand, it involved mobilization of resources for rehabilitation programme and systematic transfer of land to new hands; and on the other it had to face the psychological and occupational resistances involved in getting the landless people used to sound cultivation practices.

Broadly speaking, the landless families in Koraput could be classified into two major groups:

- (i) Engaged in petty trading and such other middleman's activities. The Dom community in particular represented this group and was of the size of nearly 17 per cent of the total population. They had hardly any interest in getting into agricultural practices, and in earning their livelihood through agriculture. As a result, a big proportion of land allotted to them under Gramdan redistribution remained uncultivated and consequently affected adversely the production. It had adverse effects on the possession of lands as distributed under Gramdan, ultimately resulting in reversion of lands back to donors or to the Gramsabha. This class of people were equally notorious for cattle thefts, as they were beef eaters. Distribution of bullock pairs to these people involved a great risk on that count. As a result they could not be effectively settled on land.
- (ii) The other group consisted of those Adivasis who were mainly engaged in earning their livelihood through coolie work. Seasonally they would join work on farms, or join as 'Gotis'

(bonded slave labourer) on the farms of big landholders. Those who had worked as 'Gotis' were fairly amenable to work as cultivators. But those who were used to work as coolies were found to be rather temperamentally indifferent to developing into good cultivators. They were happy that they had secured lands. A number of them regularly cultivated these lands too. But more or less like a 'miner' rather than an agriculturist. First of all they were not accustomed to the practices of borrowing money from *Sahukars* as they were out and out non-creditworthy. If at all they entered into borrowing transactions, it was as a 'Goti' and not otherwise. This fact had made them quite mobile for seeking employment opportunities; and as such they could not adjust with a situation where waiting for returns over a period of 4 to 5 months, was involved in agricultural practices. Moreover it was not much to their taste or fitted well with their logic. Thus, their social and psychological background generally kept them away from intensive type of cultivation practices. They were looking upon the new lands as something supplementary to their original occupations.

### 3. *Bullock Distribution :*

In the first year of the operation of the project, a big programme of distribution of bullock-pairs to landless families was undertaken from the provisions of Government grants. It was cent per cent subsidy programme. However, in course of time, when it was realized that the cent per cent subsidy programme in bullock distribution was disturbing the programme undertaken by Government agencies which was entirely a loan programme, the Sarva Seva Sangh switched on to adjust their bullock programme to a new type of loan programme. In practice it was adjusted in such a way that the grants were passed on to the Gram Sabhas; and the Gramsabhas in turn loaned bullock-pairs to the individual cultivators by arranging for repayment in 5 or 6 easy instalments. This shift in policy was found necessary for another reason as well. A free gift of a bullock-pair to a landless hardly ever induced him to be a good cultivator.

### 4. *A common bullock service :*

Apart from this programme of direct and indirect distribution of bullock-pairs, in certain villages which were mainly engaged in building demonstration centres, and where good agricultural workers were posted, a bullock service was maintained on rental basis under the aegis of Gramsabha. The general practice in this area, except for the last two decades, was that big cultivators would maintain a number of cattle and loan or rent them out to small cultivators according to their needs. However, in recent years, there was a major shift in this practice. Today even the smaller cultivator would like to have his own cattle rather than going

for a hired one. Responses to the hire-services organized by Gramsabha were good in certain villages. However, where intensive development work was not undertaken or where a good agricultural worker of the organization was not posted, tendencies on the part of landless were to go for owning cattle individually. There hiring from Gramsabhas did not take any roots.

There was a natural resistance from all these small holders to pool their cattle power together, or to bring them under a common cattle shed for purposes of proper feeding and proper care. A logic had taken deep roots that an empty cattle shed near a village hut speaks of the poverty of the villager. In very rare cases the developmental organization succeeded in breaking this logic and the cattle problem continued to remain as a perennial problem of supply in big numbers as it was ever before.

There was a provision of the order of Rs. 5,00,000, for distribution of bullock-pairs, as part of rehabilitation programme in the 5 year period. Of this amount nearly Rs. 1,92,000 were utilised by the end of June 1958. The following table gives information of distribution of bullock-pairs and the service it rendered to the number of families and villages.

TABLE No. 24.

Distribution of Bullock-pairs to the landless families as part of Rehabilitation programme subsequent to Gramdan Land Distribution.

Total No. of Bullock-pairs distributed	No. of families and villages covered by distribution		Total Expenditure incurred
	Families	Villages *	
1	2	3	4
1528	2,179	373	1,91,893

\* Total exclusive of repetition involved in three year's programme.

##### 5. Other Services :

Along with distribution of bullock-pairs, there was a programme of distributing agricultural implements. Over and above the provisions contained in the 5 Year Plan, the Tata Iron and Steel Works Ltd., were kind enough to appreciate the magnitude of the rehabilitation programme, and had made available agricultural implements of various types worth Rs. 28,000/-. The total expenditure incurred by the end of June 30, 1958 for providing agricultural implements was of the size of Rs. 36,362.

In addition, seeds and manure worth Rs. 14,000/- were distributed during this period. A housing subsidy amounting to Rs. 11,000/- also was disbursed. Nearly 800 spinning wheels costing Rs. 7,930/- were

distributed. Moreover a land reclamation programme covering 117 acres and costing about Rs. 11,000/- was implemented, accompanied by a minor irrigation programme costing Rs. 67,900/- and building an irrigation potentials for 1,100 acres of land. Thus in all, by the end of the period under review, total rehabilitation expenditure incurred amounted to Rs. 3,40,220, details of which have been given separately towards the end of the Report.

Gram Sabhas were, further, assisted to build 'Community Houses' called 'Gandhi-Ghars' on centres where integrated development was taking shape. Whereas at other places subsidy was given to construct small katcha 'Community Houses—suitable for a worker's accommodation and for a common meeting place. Subsidy was provided for 'Drinking water wells' too. Particulars of this subsidy programme are given in subsequent paragraphs.

#### 6. Construction Programme: (i) "*Gandhi Ghars*":

It was deemed necessary to construct some 'Community Houses' called 'Gandhi-Ghars' at different centres with a view to provide accommodation for the following purposes:—

- (i) A common meeting place for villagers;
- (ii) Housing a Consumers' Stores;
- (iii) Paddy husking demonstration centre;
- (iv) Carpentry Centre;
- (v) Health Centre;
- (vi) Night Adult Education Classes;
- (vii) Spinning and Weaving Shed;
- (viii) Morning Classes for children;
- (ix) Room for the village worker to live in.

A design, estimated to cost Rs. 3600.00 serving the above referred purposes was prepared. The design consisted of (i) A godown room of 20' by 12'; (ii) A store room of 10' by 6'; (iii) A community hall of 28' by 12'; (iv) A room of 10' by 12' for the worker to live in; and (v) A verandah 6' wide all round. Proposed total plinth area of the building was about 1830 sq. ft. Walls of the main building were to be of mud with thin wooden ballies closely spaced, with mud plaster and 3 coats of mud leaping; all floors were to be rammed with gravel and earth and mud plastering except for godown floor which was to be of 4" thick rammed soil concrete and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick cement plaster or three coats of mud leaping; roof would consist of thatching, supported over split bamboo battens resting on 3" bamboo common rafters. The walls in the community hall would be only 3' high over which split bamboo panells would be provided if necessary at a future date.

A proposal for the construction of 26 such 'Gandhi Ghars' was submitted to Government of Orissa, costing Rs. 93,600/- of which the

Government share was to be Rs. 70,200/- only. The rest of the amount was to come forth as people's contribution. However, later on, in due appreciation of the poor tribal area this condition of peoples' contribution was waived.

Later on it was decided to construct Gandhi-Ghars at such places, only, where the co-operation of the villagers was forthcoming or the developmental activities such as soil conservation, irrigation and agricultural development were to be taken up on behalf of the Sangh on an intensive basis; and to construct ordinary community houses costing Rs. 200 to Rs. 400.00 with cheap type specifications at all other centres. Accordingly construction of Gandhi-ghars was taken up at the following 18 centres and about 80 community houses were constructed at other places. This cheap type design had to be adopted in spite of the Government's readiness to sanction funds for some more buildings, because it was not expected that the activities would grow in all those centres on such a scale.

1. *Koraput District.*

- (a) Gundriguda.
- (b) Garanda
- (c) Sarpadu
- (d) Parikupada
- (e) Jugapadar
- (f) Deopottangi
- (g) Bandikar
- (h) Kharagpur
- (i) Bijapur
- (j) Limbaguda.

2. *Baleswar and Mayurbhanj Block.*

- (a) Kabatghati
- (b) Kukudia
- (c) Kumchia
- (d) Amtama
- (e) Pakhara Bamania
- (f) Ekadpal.

3. *Ganjam District.*

- (a) Akili
- (b) Abharsingh.

Afterwards more emphasis was laid on credit operations and the specifications of 'Gandhi-Ghars' had to be changed to serve the purpose of storing paddy and other grains. The brief description of the changes adopted in the original design were as follows:—

1. The central portion of Gandhi-Ghar is changed into permanent structure.
2. The roofing of the main building portion is changed into a zinc or A.C. sheet roofing; and
3. The flooring in the main rooms was cemented.

This new design which was estimated to cost Rs. 6,200.00 was adopted for 8 houses in Koraput District and at other places original designs were followed with a few alterations.

The following statement gives the expenditure, actually, incurred on construction of these buildings.

TABLE No. 26.

Statement showing expenditure incurred on construction of 18 Gandighars in the three districts.

No. of Buildings	District of location	Costs of Construction									
		Grant-in-aid	Sanctioned	Actually Constituted	Total expenditure for estimated purpose	Share of Government in-aid	Grant-in-aid as share of (5) by Sarva Sangh	As constructed rates	Estimated rates at revised rates	Expenditure incurred till June 1958	Expenditure recommended for sanctionation
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Koraput	18	10	64,800	48,600	48,600	64,330	56,800	54,520	56,176	7,576	
Balasore & Mayurbhanj	6	6	21,600	16,200	14,600	19,100	21,600	22,765	19,155	2,155	
Ganjam	2	2	7,200	5,400	3,700	8,258	7,200	6,870	8,258	2,858	
Total	26	18	93,600	70,200	66,900	91,688	85,600	84,155	83,589	13,389	

(ii) *Community Houses and Housing Subsidy:*

This programme included (A) Community houses constructed under the supervision of the Sangh and handed over to the gramsabhas for common use after their completion; (B) Cash or kind subsidy given to the needy gramdan village families. Funds for this activity were allotted under the Union Government grants.

A. *Community Houses:*

Community houses which were of cheap type specifications i.e., of mud walls and thatched roof were constructed at about 80 places in Koraput, Balesore and Ganjam districts with a view to provide for either of the three propositions:

1. A common meeting place for the villagers.
2. To run a small consumer store.
3. To serve as a residential quarters to village workers.

These were taken up at such centres where the developmental activities were to be on a restricted scale and where credit activity in the form of crop loans was visualised to be the main activity.

The unit plinth area cost of these houses was to be Rs. 0.50 to Rs. 0.75 depending upon the specifications of the materials used. The average plinth area of the houses was to be about 400 to 700 s.ft. This is a katcha, semi-permanent structure with mud walls, mud floors and thatched roof etc. and it was taken for granted that the annual repairs would be attended to by the village community and where necessary funds for the same might be provided by the Sangh.

The following statement gives particulars of District-wise expenditure on account of 'Community Houses'.

TABLE No. 26.

District of location	No. of Houses Constructed	Actual Expenditure incurred
1 Koraput	58	16,732
2 Balasore & Mayurbhanj	15	6,658
3 Ganjam	3	882
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>24,272</b>

(B) *Housing Subsidy:*

Under this scheme subsidies in cash or kind amounting not more than Rs. 50.00 were issued to the poorest families for the purchase of

materials like timber, grass etc. for construction of houses in Gramdan villages.

The following statement gives particulars of Centre-wise operation of this subsidy.

TABLE No. 27.

*'Housing Subsidy'*

Statement showing Distribution of 'Housing Subsidy'  
to needy villagers in Gramdan Villages.

Centre through which subsidy was operated	No. of villages which received subsidy	No. of families receiving subsidy	Actual amount issued (in Rs.)
1	2	3	4
<b>I Koraput Dist. :</b>			
1. Koraput	4	12	432
2. Nowrangpur	2	2	100
3. Rayaghada	6	84	516
4. Gunupur	2	13	625
5. Garanda	5	39	1731
6. Ambodala	4	27	1915
7. Lokarli	2	56	1710
8. Palur	2	34	262
9. Battibeda	1	4	144
II Balasore Dist.	9	23	1180
III Ganjam Dist.	9	81	2035
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>10650</b>

(iii) *Drinking water wells:*

With a view to provide protected drinking water facilities to the villagers, a programme of construction of Drinking Water Wells was incorporated in the scheme submitted to the Government of Orissa. This programme covered only such villages where some local initiative as visualized in the '*minimum programme*' was forthcoming. Part of the expenses incurred on this account, came from 'Koopdan' as well. Total expenditure, thus, incurred upto 30th June, 1959 amounted to Rs. 49,702.

Some of the wells constructed are Dry-Stone-masonry type, whereas others are pucca type. Nearly 48 such works were undertaken in the 3 districts, out of which 28 stand completed by June, 1959, 15 were under completion, and 2 were handed over to N.E.S. agency for completion. Three wells from Koraput District were abandoned after some initial work on excavation.

Following Table gives district-wise particulars of expenditure:—

TABLE No. 28.  
Statement showing Districtwise particulars  
of expenditure on Drinking Water wells.

District	Wells completed	Wells under completion	Wells abandoned	Wells handed over to N.E.S. after partly constructing	Total wells undertaken	Total expenditure incurred upto June 1959
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Koraput	19	14	3	2	38	32,052
Balasore	6	2	—	—	8	15,162
Ganjam	2	—	—	—	2	1,488
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>49,702</b>

### 7. Integrated Development Centres :

Apart from the rehabilitation programme, experiments in integrated development work were conducted at the following 8 demonstrations—cum-development centres:

(i) Battibeda;	(v) Limbaguda;
(ii) Deopottangi;	(vi) Kharagpur;
(iii) Burja;	(vii) Gobarpalli; and
(iv) Gundriguda;	(viii) Garanda.

Experiments on limited scale were deemed necessary since programmes of agricultural development were inseparably linked up with programmes of equitable distribution of land and consequent pattern of its management. In Koraput as a matter of policy redistribution of donated land to individual families was recommended. This method was to operate side by side with a small area of 'Community Land' cultivated through voluntary labour of the villagers. It was presumed that gradually, as the Adivasi takes up to intensive methods of cultivation and as he develops a greater community consciousness, the 'Community Land Pool'

would go on increasing, ultimately giving way to cent per cent '*Joint Cultivation*'.

Land distribution undertaken on this line left behind unequal holdings, in the beginning, in most cases. As has been seen earlier, in certain cases the difference was even 1 to 7. Obviously progressive equalization of land holdings, assumed first priority while initiating a broad based development programme. Progressive equalization of holdings, in its turn, meant redistribution in the first place followed by reclamation of additional land in favour of small holders.

In this case the problem that confronted the project was to evolve a pattern whereby periodical redistribution of land did not harm the incentives for production on one hand and would succeed in achieving a greater cohesion amongst the members of the Community on the other. Whereas in reclaiming new lands for securing a more equitable balance in holdings, the problem of harnessing effectively the surplus labour in the community assumed greater urgency.

Experiments of this nature could not be conducted at random. The scale of their operation was dependent on the availability of workers, well-equipped both, technically as well as ideologically for performing these tasks. Consequently only few centres were selected to operate on these lines, and for the rest of the area, the 'Minimum' programme was recommended.

Generally speaking, in all these centres efforts were made to establish demonstration centres in agricultural development activities. Battibeda tried to evolve a pattern of mobilization of labour for land development purposes through youth camps. Limbaguda experimented thoroughly with operation of rural credit on a more rational basis than the one adopted by Government departments. Here programmes of wage distribution on land development projects were linked up with liberal credit, on one hand and accumulation of Social Capital on the other. Deopottangi and Karagpur experimented with intensive contour bunding programmes accompanied by a demonstration farm. Burja represented a peculiar case, where per capita availability of land was only 0.50 acres. Here intensive paddy cultivation was attempted with a great success, so much so that even after land distribution the previous landholders did not stand to lose in terms of annual returns. Gobarpally was developed into a cattle breeding centre for upgrading the nondescript cattle in the surrounding area, whereas Gundriguda and Garanda attempted land development programmes on an intensive scale, accompanied by further redistribution. At both these centres and in their vicinity labour force was effectively mobilized and harnessed to perform this task. Of these two, Garanda saw a fruitful combination of all these aspects tried at various centres. That way the work at Garanda was a superb exercise in '*Supervised Credit*', which was actually at the back of mind of the sponsors of the programme in Koraput.

*Experiment at Garanda :*

The experiment at Garanda is separately treated towards the end. In passing it could be said here that the twin aspects of the problem as posed before these experimental centres were effectively tackled at these two places viz., (i) the aspects of redistribution of land without harming the incentives for production; and (ii) mobilization of surplus labour at their own initiative. Practice of comprehensive and intensive development methods; and a modified technique of contour bunding called 'Chakbandi', were found to yield better results on these lines. Efforts at Community Organization, in toning up its social character, and the persuasive influence exercised by the local worker, who had the ability to guide in socio-economic development, were as important contributing factors as the aspects of improved techniques.

*8. Soil Conservation :*

In Koraput, Soil-conservation programmes assumed a pre-determined priority in any scheme of Agricultural development. Instead of following rigidly the 'contour-bunding' programme, in Garanda a programme of 'Chak-band' by block bunding with cross bunds around the straight squares or rectangular sub-divisions of the land (as is done in Canal irrigated areas) with levelling within the plots, was undertaken. It was seen that the cultivator had a preference for this method. Here he found an ease of cultivation and an easy area-measure. No doubt this involved excessive earthwork. Nevertheless, they showed a preference for this type of alignment. This fact was further established when villagers from nearly 35 villages visited this work site and on return either undertook to mark a similar layout unassisted or urged the Sarva Seva Sangh to initiate such programmes in their respective villages with immediate effect. A widespread demand for this type of work was witnessed in early 1958 from all parts of the District.

However, the enormous amount of turnover of earth involved in the Chakbandi programme, upset soil fertility. Chakbandi unaccompanied by an equally concerted drive for manurial practices positively would affect production adversely for next 2 to 3 years. The tribal cultivator was pretty slow in taking up to manurial practices and adjusted only after a great effort. Consequently Sarva Seva Sangh thought it unwise, to respond to the wave of enthusiasm for 'Chakbandi' in the absence of an equally promising manurial programme. In Garanda the local worker had led the Community to a programme of Compost Pits on a grand scale prior to Chakbandi. Even then production in the first year was affected adversely. But because of his earlier feats at increased production, villagers could follow him undaunted by the initial setbacks.

Land, in Garanda, was redistributed 5 times. As a result all the paddy land, today, stands equitably distributed amongst all 31 families.

The village common lands were cultivated profitably, so much so that the community paid off its outstanding debts from this income, to the tune of Rs. 300/- in 1957-58. The Community land pool increased from 7½ acres to 10 acres during the same period. The total production increased by 80% over its 1955 pre-Gramdan level. All this, might be mainly attributed to the comprehensive development plan and to the earnest and able guidance provided by the worker on the spot.

Soil-conservation programmes followed at other centres, adopted contour bunding as a major technique. Here its immediate effect on production, though not very adverse, the villagers' response was very slow. At two centres a complete top to bottom bunding programme was undertaken. But, proper follow-up of bunding with contour cultivation, strip-cropping and adequate manuring was rarely followed by the villagers. In case of breaches due to excessive rains, the project itself had to arrange for repairs. But now, after a lapse of 2 to 3 years the bulk of the cultivators are shedding away their indifference and taking interest in proper follow-up. The following table gives the extent of two types of soil conservation programmes undertaken at the demonstration centres.

TABLE No. 29.

Statement showing expenditure on different types of soil conservation and land-reclamation works — undertaken through Demonstration Centres.

Nature of Soil conservation	Coverage		Total Expenditure	
	No. of villages	Acreage	incurred	Cost per acre
1	2	3	4	5
Contour Bunding	13	503	28,797	57
Chak-Bandi	3	111	4,600	41
Terracing	2	48	4,054	94
Land reclamation	3	74	7,374	99
Total	14 *	731	44,825	

\* Total exclusive of repetition of different types of programmes in certain villages.

It should be noted here that the costs of work of Chakbandi programme on Garanda model for straight parallels and cross laterals, clearing of land and levelling etc. on flat lands, at normal rates of work would be at Rs. 100 to Rs. 125 per acre for 4 sq. ft. cross section of bunds, but here the villagers received between Rs. 30 to Rs. 45 as subsidy or aid for community work. The margin was thus partly due to excellent organization and execution of work, and partly to mobilization of labour with community consciousness.

However, chakbandi on Garanda model with its main features of the layout of land in uniform sized rectangular plots by block bunding, is feasible and even preferable only on comparatively flat lands and plateaus with gentle and easy gradient. Such method for steeper, rolling land with conflicting slopes is not technically sound nor economically feasible for quick results.

#### 9. *Minor Irrigation :*

Gram Sabhas at these centres and even elsewhere were assisted in developing and tapping irrigation sources in the vicinity of the village or a group of villages. Under the revised proposals, Rs. 18,00,000 were allotted to Minor Irrigation works. These proposals were in the nature of recommendations of block grants for a specific purpose in the absence of any prior investigations. Originally a sum of Rs. 30,00,000 was earmarked for this purpose. However, in due appreciation of copious rains well spread over a period of 4 to 6 months, and the acute soil erosion set in motion in this tract, Sarva Seva Sangh decided to shift the priorities to a programme of soil conservation. Moreover, development of irrigation entailed expansion of credit operations. It also entailed further periodic redistribution of lands in order to distribute the benefits to the community more equitably. This would have been possible to the extent a new community consciousness gained strong roots. All this involved a time factor, Hence the Sangh held the view that irrigation should be developed only in such villages where the following three components of an effective irrigation programme co-exist:—

- (i) Where programme of land development is intensively taken up by villagers for the lands to be benefitted by irrigation;
- (ii) Where an organizational structure for 'Credit Operations is already created; and
- (iii) Where the people have shown inclination to work hard and adopt new methods of cultivation' beginning with deep preparatory tillage etc.

A closer observation revealed that the Adivasi carried out his agricultural operations in a sketchy manner. In cases he relied more on forest industries than on agriculture. Going headlong on a programme of irrigation would not have been commensurate with the purpose of the project. Therefore, a cautious programme of irrigation was undertaken and work on preliminary investigations were taken up during the summer months of 1956, and was continued all through the working season of 1956-57.

The investigations during 1956 summer were more in the nature of reconnaissance except the works at Garanda and Burja where detailed surveys were completed. Reconnaissance of nearly 200 sq. miles was completed and preliminary survey was completed for schemes totalling

irrigation of 3,000 acres with the help of a batch of 15 engineering college students during a vacation camp lasting one month during 1956.

Sixteen schemes were taken up during the year 1956-57. On some of these, work was continued even in 57-58. The schemes were predominantly *diversion schemes* as these were more economical.

Thirteen 'Tunk projects' were also taken up. These were mostly very small tanks which would hold sufficient water only for one or two watering at the end of kharif season. In some cases they would, also, help to divert the small natural flow available in the last few weeks of the kharif season. This would have, thus, benefited rice cultivation in a small way.

#### *Programme Curtailed:*

In the year 1957-58 a restricted programme for construction of irrigation works was taken up as the Sarva Seva Sangh confined its developmental activities only to selected centres. Irrigation works were taken up only in Limbaguda and Garanda centres and extension to canal at Gobarpalli (Kevatiguda) villages, as these were the only intensive work centres in the area outside N.E.S. or C.D. Blocks. By then the Sangh had reached an understanding with the Development Department, Government of Orissa to organize these and such other activities through N.E.S. agency. Accordingly plans and estimates prepared by Sarva Seva Sangh, were made available to the respective B.D.O.s in the following cases:

- (i) Diversion dam at Karli village Narayanpatna block.
- (ii) Diversion dam and canal at Hukumpet village Narayanpatna block.
- (iii) Diversion dam and canal at Peddavalada village, Narayana-patna block.
- (iv) Plans and estimates of the Boripadar project near Kalyan-singpur were partly prepared; and the same were handed over to the Asstt. Engineer, Revenue, Rayaghada for further action.

One well was constructed for irrigation at Limbaguda as an experimental programme. A large diameter of 16' was adopted in order to increase the storage capacity and to facilitate deepening at a future date by excavating a well of smaller diameter at bottom. Although the ground water table was very high i.e. 6' to 8' below G.L. in summer and 1' to 2' during rainy season; the flow was very poor because of the presence of layer of clay of fine sand mixed with micaeous silt. These stratas do not yield water freely. It was felt necessary to carry out further investigation of the strata before any more wells were attempted.

The project has incurred an expenditure of Rs. 67,927/- on minor irrigation works and has made irrigation facilities available to nearly 1165 acres. Programmes of Co-operative Organization are treated separately under next chapter.

TABLE NO. 30.  
Table showing extent of wage distribution in Gramdan areas through programmes of local works.

Type of work	Total expenditure incurred								
	Wages			Materials			Other than Local		
	No. of works	Amount	Percent	Local	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9
<b>A. Buildings:</b>									
(i) Pacca	28	68,062	48	21,269	15	52,465	37	1,41,796	
(ii) Semi Pacca	18	50,493	60	16,831	20	16,831	20	84,155	
(iii) Kutcha	72	12,024	50	12,023	50	—	—	24,047	
<b>B. Minor Irrigation Work:</b>									
(i) Tanks and Weirs	40	46,690	80	5,836	10	5,836	10	58,362	
(ii) Wells	16	2,471	25	989	10	6,425	65	9,886	
<b>C. Drinking water Wells:</b>	51	22,889	45 %	5,087	10	22,889	45	50,865	
<b>D. Soil Conservation and land reclamation:</b>	731	44,825	100 %	—	—	—	—	44,825	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,47,454</b>	<b>60 %</b>		<b>62,035</b>	<b>15 %</b>	<b>1,04,446</b>	<b>25 %</b>	<b>4,13,935</b>	

\* Total exclusive of Administrative over heads.

## *Chapter IX*

### **DEVELOPMENT OF CO-OPERATIVE ORGANIZATION**

#### **1. *Rural Credit :***

In Orissa, crop loans are advanced to cultivators through 'Grain-Golas'. These Grain-Golas deal mainly in kind. The advances are made 10 times that of the share capital to owner cultivators. At the time of recovery, the cultivator is expected to pay 25 per cent more as interest. There are about 100 such Grain-Golas in operation with a membership of 12,726 and a share capital of 84,000 in cash. In addition to this there are Grain deposits from Gram Panchayats worth Rs. 49,627 and Rs. 54,069 from other members. The loans advanced during 1957-58 through these Grain-Golas were of the size of Rs. 79,895. The total recoveries made during the same period amounted to Rs. 1,71,202 leaving an outstanding balance of Rs. 3,54,357. In terms of grains these grain-golas operated 11,096 Mds. of paddy as advances during the year under review.

Another source supplying credit and mostly in cash was the agricultural credit societies. There are nearly 132 such societies registered in the District and the membership covered by them is of the order of 15,578. The share capital of these societies amounts to Rs. 60,000 from Government and Rs. 2,32,000 from members. The advances from Central Bank to these societies during the year 1957-58 amounted to Rs. 11,17,792, whereas those from the Government were Rs. 81,883. The total advances to members through these societies during the same period amounted to Rs. 8,27,367; advances recovered in the same period amounted to Rs. 4,90,861. Here again there was an outstanding balance of Rs. 11,22,760.

It should be noted here that the cash credit short term requirements of the small cultivators are remarkably low in this District. Their requirements are mainly in grains and are generally met through the grain-gola agency operating in grains rather than through the credit societies. These 12,000 and odd members of grain-golas, hardly represent 8 per cent of the total cultivator families or about 12 to 14 per cent of the small holders. Apart from this bleak coverage of co-operative finance, the aspect of supply of credit to the small holders in particular was of great significance in the Gramdan scheme. Unless and until credit reached this class of land holders, the new communities would hardly have succeeded in registering any increases in production.

Credit needs of the cultivator in the beginning were primarily to meet the cost of production on its crops and the subsistence of his family during the monsoon. The existing maximum credit limit prescribed by co-operative societies on crop loan intended for these two purposes was

40 per cent of the value of anticipated yield. It will be seen from Table No. 31 that the borrowings of only 42.3 per cent of the cultivators were within the maximum credit limit thus prescribed, and needs of remaining 57.7 per cent could not be met fully by this limit. Because it was observed that 27.8 per cent of their produce was spent entirely on subsistence during the cultivation period and 53.8 per cent on raising the crop.

TABLE NO. 31.

45 cultivators' families classified by their proportion of borrowings to total Gross Production. \*

By proportion of borrowings to Gross production	Between 1 & 20%	Between 21 to 40%	Between 41 to 60%	Between 61 to 80%	Between 81 to 100%	Above 100%	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Cultivators	2	17	9	6	2	9	45
Percentage of total families	4.4%	37.9%	20.1%	13.3%	4.4%	19.9%	100%

\* Credit studies conducted by S.S.S. at Limbaguda.

It is evident that the existing institutions providing credit and such other facilities, have based their entire structure on the concept of property and it was well nigh difficult for them to readjust their programme with the immediate requirements of Gramdan communities, who had surrendered their property rights in favour of Community, and yet had continued to cultivate the lands individually.

The follow-up work was confronted with the concrete problem of making alternate arrangements of rural credit in this context. It was a problem as much in mobilizing the resources as it was in organizing the operations.

In due appreciation of these shortcomings in the present scheme of operation of rural credit, the Sarva Seva Sangh proposed a *District Gramdan Co-operative Credit Union for Koraput* as an apex body which would mobilize the required resources for operation of credit for these new communities in the new context of Gramdan. A group of five to six Gramdan villagers representing 100 to 200 families were to form into multi-purpose societies and to operate as primary units of the co-operative union. The Union was to act, both, as *financing body* for these primary

units; and as a *marketing organization* for removing the surplus stock from them.

These proposals were submitted to Government of Orissa in the month of November, 1956. It should be noted here that the existing grain-gola structure was catering to the needs of one or even in certain cases two Gram Panchayat areas covering a population of between 3,000 to 7,000. This was, indeed, too large a unit to function effectively in the interest of small-holders and the impersonal element which was thus injected, evidently, hampered effective supervision on one hand and guarantees of recovery on the other. Hence it was felt that credit should be operated through smaller units with an apex organization like the Co-operative Credit Union. It was anticipated that in the course of next three to four years, the turnover of this Gramdan Co-operative Credit Union would go on increasing at the rate of 5 lakhs every year thus touching the figure of Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 lakhs in the end.

The required share capital to handle operations on such large scale was proposed to be raised through Government and other sources like Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Sarva Seva Sangh, etc.—organizations which would function as promoter members for the co-operative enterprise in this backward tract.

#### *Co-operative Credit Union:*

However, the proposal did not find favour with the Government of Orissa. In the first place, it did not receive proper attention for nearly five to six months. But when a concerted effort was made to follow it up, it was observed that the State Government were nurturing certain fears about a parallel agency functioning in the field of rural credit on altogether different principles. They felt that it would create paralysing effects over the routine channels of co-operative credit.

The necessity of a separate Union for Gramdani villages to share the responsibilities of a rational credit programme was repeatedly impressed upon the minds of all those concerned with Rural Credit. The Reserve Bank of India was approached. Certain other prominent co-operators devoted to problems of rural credit, also, were convinced of the desirability of undertaking credit operations under the aegis of a separate District Co-operative Union operating solely for Gramdan villages. In consultation with all these persons, a brief note was prepared and submitted once again to the Government in the month of May, 1957. (See Appendix at the end).

Nevertheless, Government appeared to be as hesitant as before. And it was not until September 1957, the time of Yelwal conference, that the logic of this proposal could gain any ground as far as the Government of Orissa was concerned. It was first at Yelwal that the Chief Minister of Orissa could be convinced of the desirability of such a '*Credit Union*'. However, on his return to the capital, he too found it hard to convince the

administration about the desirability of a separate Union. It is needless to say that these proposals never materialised.

*Ad hoc arrangements :*

In the meanwhile, the Sarva Seva Sangh, with whatever meagre resources they had, organized a credit programme linked up with marketing activities as an unofficial effort for promoting the District Gramdan Co-operative Credit Union in course of time. The following table gives a broad picture of the extent of coverage and the size of finance that was thus unofficially operated during the period 1956-58.

TABLE No. 32.

Statement showing nature and size of Rural Credit as operated by Sarva Seva Sangh in Gramdan areas.

No. of centres operating credit	No. of villages covered	Number of families served	Total loan amount as due for recovery on 30-6-1958	Total amount recovered by 30th April 1969	Balance yet to be recovered from cultivators
1	2	3	4	5	6
58	529	7185	1 43,621	48 896	The balance transferred to Grain-Gola Societies.

Thus when the problem of operating credit on a vast field and on a more rational basis was engaging the attention of the project more prominently, the Sangh was busy in devising ways and means to reach the small-holders and the so-called non-creditworthy through a credit programme suited to his requirement. In two areas concerted effort was made in this direction.

In Limbaguda area, which covered nearly 50 Gramdan villages credit was operated on slightly liberal scale as compared to other areas; and in certain cases an attempt was made to meet the requirements beyond the prescribed limit of 40 per cent of the anticipated yield. In the year 1956-57 nearly 100 maunds of paddy and 170 maunds of Ragi, along with 80 bags of salt and 5 bags of Nager seed was advanced through Limbaguda centre which covered nearly 650 families. The rupee equivalent of this transaction was nearly Rs. 26,000. The following table gives a broad picture of credit operation through this centre over a period ending June, 1959. It should be noted here that though the credit thus disbursed through this centre is of the size of Rs. 40 only per family, borrowings from other sources were not blocked. Thus the total credit supplied

far exceeded the supply through S.S.S. Though this multi-agency operation of credit was creating difficulties in effective operation.

TABLE No. 33.

Statement showing the loan transactions as recorded  
at Limbaguda Centre for the period 1957-1959.

Year	Current Advances		Outstanding unrecovred balance of last year		Total loan in circulation		
	Loan in kind (bags)	Rupee equivalent of loan	Loan in kind (bags)	Rupee equivalent of balance	Percentage of recovery to total transaction of the previous year	Loan in kind (bags)	Rupee equivalent of loan
1	2	3	4	5			
For the Year 1957	1255	26,000	—	—	—	1255	26,000
For the Year 1958	1206	28,200*	168	3,325	87.2	1374	31,525
For the Year 1959	1182	23,581	487	10,033%	68.2	1669	33,614%

\* Inclusive of Rs. 2470 advanced in cash at Limbaguda.

% Inclusive of Rs. 1255 as balance of Rs. 2470/-.

Note : Total No. of members was 1283; as against 1088 of actual loan holders. The number was increased from 650 in 1957 to 1283 in 1959.

As far as recoveries were concerned the experience once again falsified the current notions of credit-worthiness. Table No. 31 classifies the cultivators according to their borrowing and its proportion to production. It would be seen from this classification that except where cultivators appear in the class above 100% borrowings of the gross production, all the small land-holders had fully repaid their loans. On the contrary realization of loans from substantial landholders has not been easy. Out of the nine cultivators, standing on the last rung of the ladder, seven had partially repaid while the remaining two came forward with an offer to repay the loans by sending their sons out to become 'Gotis'. This would have, however, defeated the very purpose of the credit programme. Hence, they were provided with work on the construction programme, and were helped to repay the loans in instalments, without being charged any interest on their borrowings. The moral pressure which was borne on individual cultivators by the respective communities helped the Sarva

Seva Sangh to recover the loans without much strain. Again the quantum of loan in each case was small enough to absorb the defaulting cultivators in various development activities undertaken by the same agency. The recoveries that year were nearly 87% of the total advances. It is worth nothing that recovery was in no way more difficult when the borrowings were as high as 80 per cent of the gross produce as compared to those where borrowings were less than 40 per cent of the production.

Fall in recoveries for 1958 could be attributed to two factors: (i) a greater percentage of recovery of outstanding dues forced upon by Grain Gola and Government agencies and (ii) slightly reduced hold of community spirit as a result of setbacks of 1957 anti-Gramdan moves. It could be said from experience in Koraput that the prospects of the recovery are primarily dependent on the moral influence of the financing agency on the borrowers, and not so much on the ratio of borrowing to the production. No co-operative or any other financing agency would succeed in the field of rural credit unless it succeeds, equally effectively, in influencing the attitude of the borrowers and in creating a moral sanction within the community operating the credit. Moreover it was evident from the observations at Limbaguda that setting the lower credit limit did not necessarily improve the chances of recovery.

#### *Few Observations :*

It seemed more logical to relate the credit limit to the needs of the cultivators for efficient production. A further examination of the problem revealed that the ratio of credit needed to the production depended on the income of the cultivators, the area under different crops and the technique of cultivation. Short term credit mainly consists of two components: the subsistence needs during the crop season, and the production needs such as seeds, fertilizers etc. for rearing the crops. The production needs bear a fixed proportion to crop production depending of course on the area under different crops and the technique of production.

Thus, the credit needed for subsistence during crop season, will obviously bear a high ratio to the total production for low income groups. In extreme cases, for cultivators whose annual crop production is barely sufficient to meet the consumption needs even during the crop season, this ratio may be nearly 100 per cent. Obviously such farmers would have to seek other non-agricultural sources of income or to submit to conditions of semi-starvation if employment opportunities do not exist. The following table gives a broad hint at the ratio of credit needed to production according to different size of holdings and income groups. From the data presented it would appear more logical to fix the credit limits (ratio of credit to production) on basis of size and quality of holdings, as well as the crop areas and methods of cultivation. To administer credit on basis of such flexible limits, the financing agency (the large-

size credit society) might need some special assistance from the extension services or might have to create its own agency for effective supervision and guidance.

TABLE No. 34.

Proportion of credit requirements to the total production as classified by holdings of various sizes and incomes.

Requirements of credit as subdivided between subsistence & production purposes — as a proportion to total production	1 acre of paddy land with 3 — acres of dry land. Gross production adequate for six months subsistence for the family	1 acre of paddy land with 6 acres of dry land. Gross production adequate for one year's subsistence for the family	3 acres of paddy land with 12 acres of dry land. Gross production much in excess of subsistence needs of the family
	Group I	Group II	Group III
As required for subsistence during crop season	55%	27%	12%
As required for purposes of production	25%	25%	25%
Total credit requirements as a percentage of the total production	80%	52%	37%

#### *Supervised Credit :*

In Garanda group of villages such a programme of supervised credit was operated under the able guidance of an eminent agriculturist. Here every effort was made to meet the cent per cent credit requirement of all the cultivators and to provide enough work wherever the existing production was found to be inadequate in repaying the advanced amount. The employment programme was so weaved round aspects of land development that apart from providing work, it ensured increased production in future on one hand and decreased inequalities in land holdings on the other. This was accomplished in two ways:—

- (a) by insisting upon redistribution of good land in order to narrow down existing inequalities in holding; and
- (b) by reclaiming and irrigating more land in favour of those cultivators who had received less land under 1st distribution.

Another factor that contributed to this process was the weightage given to the poor cultivators while disbursing wages. The poorer cultivator received wages at a subsidized rate. This way a programme of year

round employment was built and nearly 43 acres of fresh land was reclaimed. A new irrigation source was harnessed to irrigate about 10 acres; 250 cart loads of compost was prepared. Nearly 7 acres of land in the community pool was fruitfully cultivated on voluntary basis. Original inequalities in holdings of wet land were reduced to nil. Thus these villages not only could repay the 100% credit required for their regular production, but also could come out to pay off the old debts of Government which were nearly 6 years old. They paid nearly Rs. 300/- towards repayment of old debts in the year 1956-57; and did not have to borrow at all from any other agency than Sarva Seva Sangh, during the same period.

These achievements were possible as much because of a production programme accompanied by land development, as the care that was taken to regulate the consumption of the community by cutting down extravagant expenditure on social and religious ceremonies. Social reforms like prohibition were introduced. Garanda experiment once again pointed to the fact that the problem of credit was two-fold. In the first place, it is necessary to create the agency which can administer the required volume of credit by every category of cultivator (small, medium and large) in order to exploit the land available to its optimum level of production, and secondly, it should evolve, through experiment and observation certain norms for operation of credit which would suit the conditions of holdings of different sizes and under different types of cultivation practices.

Thus it could be said that the credit activity must be followed up by a planned developmental activity with sanctions of the community, if it aims at any rationality. In the absence of any such employment programme under a planned development scheme, the credit activity will hardly ever gain any stability, security or make any significant progress. Thus only through integrated operation of extension, credit, and land development programme it would be possible to utilize the resources in land to the fullest extent, was the lesson that was drawn from these experiments in Koraput. In Gramdan communities reasons for differential treatment to different strata of cultivators arose out of incompleteness of sharing and the continuation of inequalities in distribution even after Gramdan. To the extent these limitations were overcome, such differential treatments naturally became superfluous, and the credit operations were related exclusively to the requirements of land development and production.

#### *Long and Medium term credit :*

The problem of medium and long term credit was more complicated because of change in the system of property rights in land, whereby lands could not be mortgaged and therefore did not constitute a security in the conventional sense. Medium and long term credit was mainly available on security of lands,

There were two possible solutions to this problem: Either to vest the land in a co-operative society, with or without joint cultivation, or to recognize the Gramsabha itself as a co-operative society.

*Working group on Co-operatives :*

In order to raise these issues and to seek solutions thereto, Sarva Seva Sangh proposed a 'working group' during the course of discussions on co-ordination with Community Development Programme. The Ministry of Community Development, accordingly, constituted a 'Working Group' incorporating representatives of Sarva Seva Sangh the Planning Commission, and the Ministry. The problem as posed before this group was stated in the following terms:—

"As soon as a Gramdan is formed and individual ownership in land ceased, certain consequences are seen to follow. The most important one being that credit to individual families from private sources stops, because land is no more available as security. The co-operative financing agency or the State Government have to extend credit to the community as an entity. In this context recognition of Gram Sabha as a legal entity becomes necessary. Formal transfer of land from the ownership of individual holders to the ownership of the Gram Sabha would also be necessary."

"Secondly the Sarvodaya concept desires the Gramsabha to be automatically considered as a co-operative financing agency. There is likely to be difficulty in such automatic recognition, because a co-operative under the present conception and laws is a body of persons wishing to work together for certain specific purposes and coming forward to register themselves as a co-operative. In other words a person cannot be born in a co-operative as he can be born in a Panchayat. Again, co-operation being 'voluntary' and Gram Sabha under the present Gramdan concept being a body covering the whole village including those who are not members of the Gramdan Community has the risk of ceasing to be voluntary if the whole Gram Sabha is automatically considered as a co-operative. What should be done in this situation? It was difficult for the Gramdan concept to drop its basic idea of not having a multiplicity of institutions at the village level."

When the pros and cons of the problem was thus being systematically examined, Sarva Seva Sangh had to come to some workable arrangement with the existing organization of credit so that the villagers were saved from an awkward situation. The villagers had already experienced a near economic blockade during 1956 and 1957. In December 1957 the Registrar of Co-operative Societies held discussions with Sarva Seva Sangh and was agreeable to advance loans on the security of crops and to treat Gramdan villages on par with other non-Gramdan villages as far as crop loans were concerned. Thus when a fresh agreement was reached with the co-operative department, the Sarva Seva Sangh decided to give a fair

trial to the Grain-Gola scheme of the Government of Orissa and to fall in line with their policies of operation through bigger units and with existing maximum credit limits. The Sangh decided to enlist the villagers from Gramdan villages as members of Grain Golas Societies and to progressively withdraw their finance from the credit field. Temporarily, they had agreed to allow the Grain-Gola societies to utilize the existing paddy loans in circulation which belonged to Sarva Seva Sangh, as loan deposits for a period not exceeding three years.

## 2. *Marketing :*

Other aspects which were originally proposed to be handled by the District Gramdan Co-operative Credit Union related to marketing of surplus stocks from the primaries. The Marketing Section of the Sarva Seva Sangh which was functioning as an unofficial agency working as Co-operative Union had to take up to making open purchases of paddy and ragi, along with the activity of removing surplus stocks from the primary units. The open purchases scheme became necessary because two sub-divisions out of three namely Rayaghada and Koraput were deficit areas in paddy. There was hardly any question of removing surplus stocks. Here it was actually a task of building co-operative supplies in these commodities.

Sarva Seva Sangh had received a loan from All-India Khadi and Village Industries Commission of the size of Rs. 1,20,000 for stocking paddy, de-husking the same and selling that rice instead of paddy in the market. Hand-pounded rice worth Rs. 50,000 was purchased in Nowrangpur market and the same was transported to deficit areas to be sold through the consumer's stores organized under Gramdan scheme. Existing transport facilities in Koraput district were quite inadequate and it was felt necessary to have independent transport service. Accordingly four heavy vehicles were purchased in the year 1957 out of the funds allotted to Gramdan work by the Central Government. Total expenditure incurred under this head amounted to Rs. 94,637. The Gandhi Smarak Nidhi were kind enough to advance Rs. 2 lakhs as 'Foundation Funds' for credit and marketing activities. This amount too was utilised along with the Khadi Commission's loan for stocking paddy, for marketing and for credit programme in Gramdan areas. In the year 1956-57 All India Khadi & Village Industries Commission advanced an additional loan of Rs. 2,40,000 for stocking paddy and oilseeds. The same was invested in the marketing activity through the marketing section. Thus, the total investment on marketing which was Rs. 53,203 in 1955-56 was raised to Rs. 5,55,052 during 1956-57 and during 1957-58 it was again brought down to Rs. 4,82,205.

It would be seen from these figures that the stock in trade as on 30th June, 1956, 1957 and on 1958 was of the size of Rs. 13,145; Rs. 3,15,809 and Rs. 63,521 respectively. The maximum stocks on hand were

by June 1957. The total sales in that year leaving aside the interbranch transactions were of the size of Rs. 1,33,641 which meant that the total purchases had reached a mark of Rs. 4,49,450 in the year 1957.

By this time (December '57) the Government issued control orders and did not allow paddy stocks to be removed outside the district without permit. That way a very favourable market in Andhra Pradesh down south was insulated as they wanted to remove the surplus stocks from Koraput to other districts of Orissa alone. The huge stocks thus built, by Sarva Seva Sangh could not be kept rolling. The control on movement of rice affected the prices. On an average fall in prices by Re. 1/- a maund was registered immediately. Thus the huge stocks at hand which were of the order of 20,000 bags led the marketing activity in a loss of about Rs. 40,000 instantaneously. Though the profit and loss account for the year 1956-57 shows a net profit of Rs. 17,454 these figures refer only to Book Stocks, the actual stocks were not tallied then. The fall in prices in the open market also was not taken into consideration. Depreciation charges on transport vehicles were also not accounted for. All these unaccounted losses in the previous year accumulated to present a much floated figure of Rs. 47,513 as a net loss during the year 1957-58. (It should be noted here that even during this year depreciation charges on the heavy vehicles were not accounted for).

The Marketing Section was treated as a commercial activity mainly to be conducted in the interest of Adivasis, and it was visualised that it would operate on no loss no profit basis. This led the organisation to charge the administrative overheads to the activity itself. The total administrative charges as debited to the marketing activity amounted to Rs. 57,531. The year 1957-58 being the year of optimum activity. This year was marked by clearing of old stocks that were lying with the organisation. By this time, the project had already decided to close down marketing activity at the earliest opportunity for the following reasons:—

- (i) The idea of starting a District Co-operative Union and running the marketing activity on its behalf did not materialise.
- (ii) The small sized credit societies as visualised by Sarva Seva Sangh also were not feasible. So in order to save the villagers from an awkward situation, the project had to adjust with the existing pattern of credit operated by co-operative department.
- (iii) Moreover, in June 1957, it was decided to restrict the activities of Sarva Seva Sangh, to only 200 villages operated through 10 centres, and to persuade the State Government to organise the development programme and rural credit in rest of the Gramdan Villagers on their own.

It would be seen that the credit that was operated by the project was of the size of Rs. 1,43,000/-. It was operated through nearly 56 centres catering to the needs of about 600 villages and covering nearly 7,000

families. A staff of about 30 to 40 workers was engaged in disbursing the credit and conducting the marketing activities. All this meant administrative overheads to the tune of Rs. 3,000 per month during the year 1957-58. The total loss during three years was of the size of Rs. 30,059. Now as the activity is being wound up in the current year, it is most likely that there would be further losses to add to the previous total.

Looking back to the performance in the sphere of marketing, it would be seen that the work expanded suddenly during 1957, and that way it was quite sporadic in nature. In fact, this expansion was thrust upon the project by the virtual economic blockade that was impending on Gramdan areas, which had resulted in drying up the prevalent credit sources. The expansion had to be undertaken in the absence of proper personnel experienced in handling such tasks. The persons engaged in the marketing and credit activity could not see a clear picture of total economic activity and were isolated completely from other activities. It appeared at one time that there had hardly been any common motivation left. Moreover, the persons engaged in this activity were not fully trained especially in book-keeping and accounting. In its absence, no wonder it turned out to be a herculean task in administering such a vast programme systematically.

A second striking point that deserves attention was that in building stocks on such a grand scale, the project was taking great risks, though it was forced by the logic of circumstances. If only the project had engaged itself in buying at the village end and in selling away the same in the nearest market immediately with whatever little margin they could get, probability of losses could have been nil, and that way the setback as it was experienced by the marketing activity today could have been avoided.

### 3. *Co-operative Provision Stores :*

Side by side with Credit & Marketing, the project had visualised a programme of Co-operative provision stores operating for a group of villages. It would cater to the needs in foodgrains and other essential commodities like oil, salt, cloth, etc. It was through this programme that co-operative activity was initiated in this area. Nearly 38 such stores were organised in the project area, each store catering to the needs of 8 to 10 nearby villages covering roughly 200 to 300 families. Working capital for these stores was raised by share capital (Rs. 1.50 per family) and by advances given by Sarva Seva Sangh (upto 10 times the share capital). Minimum advance made available was Rs. 200 in any case. Over and above these advances towards working capital, in certain cases, where the villagers would co-opt to manage these stores by themselves, Sarva Seva Sangh had a scheme of giving grant-in-aid upto Rs. 200 to such stores, to meet probable losses on account of inefficient management. It was seen that initiatives thus built amongst the villagers for the manage-

ment did build in return enough motivations for learning basic arithmetic and such other minimum requirements for operating the store. Such management, however, in certain cases, (mainly because of ignorance,) did incur losses.

*'Burja Store':*

The persons who had taken initiative in managing these stores on their own were further linked up with a training programme, organised around such stores which operated very efficiently and successfully under the guidance of workers of Sarva Seva Sangh. The following Table gives a more elaborate picture of a store organised at Burja, a village on Koraput-Rayagada line—which was utilised as a base for training promising villagers in management skills in this field. It would be seen that this Burja store had made profits of the size of Rs. 4,000/-. This store functioned as a part of marketing section, feeding 2-3 small stores in the vicinity. The share capital of this store was Rs. 200/- coming forth from about 140 members in this area. It served an area of 10 mile radius, and catered to about 100 persons a day on an average. No rents were charged for the building. There were two workers working in the store upto June 1959, with monthly salaries of Rs. 70 and 15 respectively.

TABLE No. 35.

Statement showing nature of Annual turnover at Burja Provision Stores.

S.No.	Particulars	1956	1957	1958	Total
		Jan. Dec.	Jan. Dec.	Jan. Dec.	
1.	Food grains	3,045.80	33,998.00	12,433.80	49,477.60
2.	Edible Oils & Spices	135.44	835.05	625.86	1,596.62
3.	Salt	1,107.62	1,471.86	1,524.14	4,103.62
4.	Sugar & Gur	11.00	711.18	391.80	1,113.98
5.	Kerosene	903.62	1,453.38	1,579.22	3,936.22
6.	Clothing	655.19	846.24	314.29	1,815.72
7.	Soap	—	150.23	254.90	405.13
8.	Turmeric & Nigerseed	—	3,214.48	111.00	3,325.48
9.	Miscellaneous	168.24	959.86	654.04	1,782.14
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,026.91</b>	<b>43,640.28</b>	<b>17,889.05</b>	<b>67,556.24</b>

Note :—(1) Turnover in the year 1959 upto June Rs. 28,000/-.

(2) Increased turnover as seen in the year 1957 is due to a training camp of S.S.S. functioning then at Burja.

(3) Purchases in food grains invariably fall down when the mango season is good.

(4) Prices here compare favourably with ruling prices in a neighbouring Police Station Headquarters on 2 miles.

To-day the working capital of this store amounts to Rs. 4000/- (inclusive of dead stock worth Rs. 1000) and it has started its journey on its own legs.

The organisers of this activity now propose to register this store as part of a Multi Purpose Society and divert about Rs. 1,000/- from the profits towards sponsoring new additional membership.

#### 4. *Minor Forest Produce Marketing Societies :*

In the year 1957 a loan of Rs. 7,000/- from Khadi and Village Industries Commission was made available to an already existing Forest Produce Co-op. Marketing Society in Umenkote area through the Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies. However, for various reasons the society could not function properly and hence the loan remained unutilized and was returned back to Sarva Seva Sangh next year.

In the year 1958 Sarva Seva Sangh stepped directly in the field and organised one Society in Narayan Patna Area. *The Sarvodaya, Forest Produce Marketing Society—Gumma*, started with a share capital of Rs. 960 from 96 members, and was operative in Rayaghada Range over an area covering 2 Gram Panchayats. This year one more Gram Panchayat area has been incorporated in the working of this Society.

Sarva Seva Sangh had undertaken to bear all the managerial charges on account of this activity for a period of three years on a progressively decreasing scale. So that by the end of three years the society should be able to manage its own affairs. During the year under review the Society has made a net profit of Rs. 623/- over a turnover of approximately Rs. 2,700/-.

As a next step, the Sarva Seva Sangh offered to undertake sole responsibility of myrobalam collection for the entire district from 1959 onwards, and to organise this activity through co-operative units. However, the Government was keen on encouraging Tannin Extraction in Koraput and to leave myrobalam collection to the party who would install a Tannin Extraction Plant in the District. Evidently attempts of Sarva Seva Sangh to expand this activity did not bear fruit. Now the Government have earmarked one Range (Ramgiri) for Sarva Seva Sangh for purposes myrobalam collection and as such it was kept out from annual auctions this year. It is proposed to organise forest labour co-operatives in this area as part of the Pilot Project in Boipariguda Area.

These Forest Labour Co-operative Societies will have to be smaller units in order to function effectively. A Panchayat area would be an ideal unit in Koraput. However, such small society cannot function effectively when encircled by contractors on all sides. When operations on a smaller scale are planned, a complete range will have to be operated by eliminating contractors totally. Moreover the Societies should be vested with all allied operations like collection, storing and marketing.

So long as these societies have not federated themselves into a District Union, marketing activity would necessarily have to be managed by Government Agency. Along with collection of minor forest produce felling of timber and working of 'coupes' should form part and parcel of the activities of these societies progressively.

If the State is desirous of encouraging such societies, it could be said that within three years these societies can take up to marketing along with collection.

*Bombay Example :*

The next stage that follows would be operation of 'Timber Coupes'. Government of Bombay have developed a new pattern for working these coupes by the Adivasi forest dwellers. These Societies work in partnership with Government. A schedule is prescribed District-wise for various operations, right from felling of timber to collection and stocking at a convenient place for auctioning. Government and society jointly auction the produce, and after deducting all charges as per the schedule, the margin is divided between the Society and the State. The State receives 75% of the net profits as Royalty and the remaining 25% is the share of the Co-operative.

Most difficult aspect of this work, is the training of workers to manage these societies. Random selection of workers is not going to make any mark. It should be attempted in a comprehensive way with a long range, and phased programme. All the schools in the area will have to be Basic Schools having forestry as main craft. Adivasis who receive training in these schools will ultimately take charge of this activity. Further specialisation at High School and College level also, will have to be introduced gradually. When this is done these societies could be entrusted with developmental activities along with the activities of exploitation of forest wealth. No doubt this is a long range programme. But a firm beginning could be made right now.

A Federation at District level can ultimately be the sponsoring body for such training-cum-organizational activity. The same Federation can handle the processing part of the job. At this stage Government should work in partnership with this Federation rather than depending too much on departmental action.

If the Government is desirous of moving on this line Sarva Seva Sangh would be interested in organizing a few societies in the District. The programme in that case will be arranged range-wise. At present the Sarva Seva Sangh is working in few pockets developing Grain Gola Societies in the first instance. These Grain Golas, it is proposed, will be the sponsoring bodies for the Forest Labour Co-operatives.

*5. Land Management & Co-operative Farming :*

On the background of Gramdans, where no individual ownership

of land existed collective farming appeared to be the only logical mode of farming operations. However, certain factors stood in the way of this otherwise logical conclusion.

Though under Gramdan, individual ownership in land ceased to exist, in practice it meant that only alienation of land was disallowed. Old individual holdings continued to exist subject only to such modifications as were found necessary in the context of fresh demands of the previous landless. As a result, inequalities in land holdings persisted. Even where land distribution did not show much of inequalities, near-primitive methods in farm operations, resulted invariably in exceeding the costs of production. Under such circumstances any drastic switchover from the prevalent methods of self employed farm-labour-organization would have disrupted the organizations in its economic content or opened it to a high handed undemocratic managerial super-domination. Moreover, the psychological inhibitions of the Adivasi to such a major switchover in employment pattern would have been far more harmful to the institutional growth.

A pattern of co-operative organization suited to Koraput was thus suggested through a note to the Co-operative Department. Main features of these proposals were :

- (a) provision for individual cultivation of land with restricted ownership in land;
- (b) provision of additional means of production like bullock-pair, implements etc. through the society jointly, while the existing individually owned means remained undisturbed;
- (c) Co-operative common sale and purchase;
- (d) adherence to a rational crop-plan;
- (e) group management of village common lands;
- (f) encouragement to existing practices of mutual aid; and efforts at providing fuller employment.

For further details see note on Agricultural Co-operatives at the end.

Tentative Model bye-laws were prepared and applications submitted in early 1958. The Registrar had promised to register at least 20 such societies on experimental basis. But till today not a single society is registered. Applications of two were returned for some minor modifications and other two remained unattended.

Though registration of co-operatives did not make any headway, the workers continued to experiment with different forms. Today at Shrikhandi a village in Gunupur Police Station area, all the land is cultivated by the villagers together. This is their third year. No individual allotment has been made. All work together and share the produce on the basis of the work put in. This is a village with 13 families and 127 acres of cultivable land, originally donated by four donors.

In another village, Limbaguda, in Boipariguda Police Station, a Collective Co-operative was attempted in 1958. Nearly 66 acres of land was brought under this collective, which included 7 landed families and 5 erstwhile landless families who had received rather poor quality land under distribution. The enterprise worked well for the 1st season. But soon the surrounding atmosphere affected its logic and the members decided to revert to the old pattern of individual family cultivation.

Progress in this field appeared to depend on the facilities provided for operating Credit and for making available technical know-how. Unless Government or some other Credit Agency comes out boldly in the field, co-operative management of land has its obvious limitations.

## *Chapter X*

### **VILLAGE AND COTTAGE INDUSTRIES**

#### *Intensive Area Development Scheme :*

The erstwhile All India Khadi & Village Industries Board had agreed to start six Intensive Development Areas in Orissa (out of which four were to be in Koraput and one each in Ganjam and Balasore) as a token of their appreciation of Gramdan movement. The Intensive Area Scheme normally calls for an effective local registered institution to implement its programme and for disbursement of funds. But as the area selected for work was tribal and had no effective local organisation, it was decided to channelise the funds through the Sarva Seva Sangh.

Another departure was made in the original pattern of Intensive Area Scheme which related to size of population and area of operation. Because of the predominantly tribal character of the area and of the very small and widely dispersed villages over the entire district, it was necessary to depart from the normal working of the scheme which recommended a population of 20,000 in a compact block. Even grouping of all the Gramdan villages amongst themselves into units of 20,000 population, by leaving the non-gramdan villages out of its orbit had to be abandoned for practical administrative difficulties. Eventually, centres of effective work, which numbered about 40 by 1957, had to be established as forerunners of the Intensive Area Scheme.

A closer study of the problems of economic development even did not permit, the conventional expenditure pattern proposed under the scheme. The village industries programmes of the Khadi Board were prepared on the basis of fairly advanced villages as compared to the tribal area. It was therefore necessary to reallocate the funds to suit the local conditions.

In addition to some departure from normal pattern of expenditure and selection of area, it was also necessary to effect some changes in the actual organisation of the industries. There was not any artisan class nor was agriculture the mainstay of the tribals. Industries based on forest resources were ideally suited to the temperament and habits of the Adivasi. Hence the ten industries which were proposed to be taken up under this scheme with priority to promotion of khadi, oil ghani, hand pounding of rice, leather and soap production from non-edible oil seeds and pottery at few centres etc. were gradually readjusted to existing local industries and emphasis was shifted to forest based industries. Consequently investigations of forest resources from the point of view of their present exploitation and future development were taken up. Whatever

little work was being done on handpounding of rice had, also, to be slowed down due to other factors such as Government controls on movement of paddy stocks to outside markets.

*Receipts :*

By March, the Sarva Seva Sangh had received about Rs. 8,00,000/- from the commission against the budget proposal submitted by them for development of various industries in Koraput, Balasore and Ganjam districts of Orissa. Rs. 4,26,850/- were to be spent as full or partial grants and Rs. 3,86,700/- as loan. A further grant of Rs. 54,000/- towards the end of 1957 and Rs. 84,000 in the year 1958 were received from the Commission to cover expenses on salaries and office contingencies thus bringing the figure of grants to Rs. 5,64,850/- by June, 1958. A brief review of progress of work for promotion of various industries is presented in subsequent paragraphs. (For details of Receipts and Expenditure, see Appendix A.)

*Oil Ghani Industry*—has a great promise in this area. Oil seeds worth rupees four lakhs are annually exported. Major exports are of (edible) niger oil seeds; and Mohwa seeds which is classed amongst non-edible oil seeds. Local consumption of oil is almost negligible. Adivasis consume more of Mohwa oil than other oils like niger or ginger and that too extracted by some hand operated process. To Adivasis bullock-driven ghani is a novelty. Manually operated wooden lever, similar to 'Tiriha' of M.P. is commonly used by him for oil extraction. Before introduction of bullock-driven ghannis it was necessary to train up the local people. Three model demonstration-cum-production centres were operated at Rayaghada, Garanda and Ganjam, with a view to train local hands. In addition to this training programme, a ghani production unit was operated at Saranjam Karyalaya Rayaghada.

*Soap Industry* faces the problem of marketing. The use of soap in tribal areas is negligible. The two 'C' class units started by the Sangh, one at Jeypore and the other at Rayaghada sell their product mainly in the towns. The non-edible oil used for the manufacture of soap is Mahwa.

*Leather Industry* :—In Balasore which was a fairly advanced area as compared to Koraput, one model tannery was started with 3 carcass recovery centres, and 5 bone-crushing units in the surrounding area. The carcass recovery centres are making very slow progress. There are vast potentialities for tanning and leather industry in Koraput. But for want of trained hands we couldn't make a beginning nor did we approach the Khadi Commission for funds.

*Hand Spinning* :—Promotion of hand spinning is expected to be an industry with universal application. We were visualising that each intensive area would be able to introduce about 1000 Kisan Charkhas within a period of three years. We had trained hands available with us. The women workers were good spinners and were anxious to spread the

spinning activity in their respective villages. In fact, efforts were made to introduce 1300 spinning wheels in Koraput district. Regular classes were also started. But the Adivasis did not take to it. Till today it has not been possible for us to persuade them to take up to spinning. If this industry is to be popularised among the Adivasis it will be necessary to start common work sheds in each village, where 4-6 annas wage for an eight hour day would be guaranteed to the participating women. But if such a procedure is to be followed, then it is better to introduce AMBAR CHARKHA instead of Kisan Charkhas as at present. They will be working for 6 to 8 hours under the direct supervision of an instructor and will be able to earn 6 to 8 annas per day after a period of 3-4 months.

Eventually Ambar training was started at first at Jeypore; and now we have taken up Nandapur Padva area as our base. About 100 charkhas are plying today and 5000-6000 hanks per month are produced. About 15 weavers are engaged on khadi weaving at Kharagpur in Nandapur area. Monthly production has come to 1200 sq. yards. So from promotion of khadi i.e. Kisan Charkhas, the emphasis has been shifted to Ambar Charkha and instead of working in all intensive areas, we are running 30 charkhas in Balasore and 100 in Nandapur Thana. About 15-20 Ambar Charkha sets each are being plied at Jeypore and Nowrangapur. All the Kisan Charkhas given in different areas are being collected back and are being redistributed in Nandapur area where an intensive effort in khadi production is being made.

*Pottery* was organised as a training-cum-demonstration centre at Jeypore. Four boys were trained. Though demonstration of the use of improved equipment and new types of ware has been of some benefit to potters in or around town areas and has helped in earning a few annas more, it will be, nevertheless, necessary to induce the potters to go in for the manufacture of tiles and bricks for which there is an increasing demand from urban centres. Notions of some social status attached to manufacture of pots as opposed to brick manufacture, often act as obstacles in popularising the latter.

Peculiarly enough, in Koraput entire villages inhabited by potters alone is most common phenomenon. One such village as a unit has been taken up to diversify production on co-operative basis. It has been possible to take up manufacture of new types of pottery and allied products and to minimise the element of casteism.

*Carpentry and Blacksmithy* : as industries are worked on primitive techniques. The extremely backward economy of the area did not make any demands on high skills in both these trades. The required artisans for most of the works undertaken during the plan periods is being catered to by the migrated element from surrounding areas.

In order to make the Adivasi co-sharer of the benefits of expenditure programmes, training of artisans was a prerequisite. *Workshop* activity (Saranjam Karyalaya) at Rayagada was one of the earliest of

**Sarva Seva Sangh** programmes designed to suit this requirement. Facilities for manufacture of village industry equipment and for training of artisans in carpentry, blacksmithy, oil ghani manufacture and operation, soap manufacture, bee-keeping etc. were made available here. But it was found very difficult to recruit trainees from Adivasis for these avocations. Gradually the emphasis was shifted to forest based industries and the training facilities available at the Saranjam Karyalaya were utilised for candidates coming from comparatively advanced areas. The Saranjam Karyalaya is equipped with machinery costing about Rs. 20,000, and is operated by well-trained, experienced hands.

**Paddy husking** :—‘Dhenki’ is a traditional industry most common to all households in this tract. Improving the holding capacity in grains of the Adivasi families was a major task that confronted the promoters of this industry. This was attempted through a loan programme operated by Gram Sabhas. As a consequent step to this loan programme a scheme of purchasing hand pounded rice was also undertaken both at village head and at the market places. The amount available for stocking of paddy and dehusking was of the size of Rs. 2,40,000. The same was fully utilized during the peak period of marketing activity (1957-58). However Government control orders prohibiting movements of rice outside the province, caused incalculable harm to the stocks built by Sarva Seva Sangh. They had to suffer losses, during that year, to the tune of Rs. 47,000/- on that account. (The staying capacity of hand-pounded rice is strictly very short; and holding it over longer periods is ruinous).

**Local Industries** :—Lac, Bamboo and fibre, these were the three industries proposed to be encouraged under the scheme for promoting local industries. Out of these three work on cultivation and collection of raw lac was started right from the second half of the year 1956. A trained hand was engaged to supervise the processing unit. Upto June 1858 raw lac worth Rs. 9,600 was purchased and was utilised for the processing unit operated at Jeypore. Funds earmarked for other two industries remained unutilized.

Regarding other local industries collection of minor forest produce is the biggest industry of Koraput district but this does not come under the purview of Khadi Commission.

**Village Industries Godowns** :—When the village industries programme was gradually taking shape, sheds for pottery, soapary, model oil-ghani and other village industries were already under construction. Godowns, also, were constructed to stock local agricultural produce prior to sale for processing at village level. At some centres accommodation was provided for stocking paddy to be advanced to villagers as crop loan. Khadi godowns, also, were constructed as part of village industries programme. Few other buildings were constructed at the premises of ‘Industrial School’ Rayaghada to house different village industries. This was part of training programme. Total number of works executed as part of this

programme were 28 and the total expenditure incurred on their construction upto 30th June, 1958, amounted to Rs. 58,000/-.

*Expenditure :*

The total expenditure incurred on the various items of Village Industries Programme upto June, 1958 amounted to Rs. 3,76,364/- out of which the component on salaries and contingencies amounted to Rs. 1,90,248/-. As regards loans, on 30th June, 1958, a sum of Rs. 2,65,600/- outstanding as loans advanced to various industries according to the scheme of A.I.K. & V.I. Commission.

The experience of the Koraput district clearly proves that each intensive area will have to be separately considered. The plans will have to be undertaken for exploiting the local resources. Each intensive area scheme will have its own plan of work. There are number of industries which do not come under the purview of the Khadi Commission at present and may demand departure from present accepted and approved patterns. The industries that are being run on behalf of the Khadi Commission could receive a favourable response in other areas but as for tribals their problems are different and the industries which may help the economy of the area may have to be encouraged. In Adivasi areas forest industries will have the first priority, agricultural development will be the main activity and the present pattern of village industries may have a better prospect afer the area reaches a particular stage in its development both in forestry and agriculture.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMMES

### 1. *Eradication of Yaws :*

One of the distinctive medical features of Koraput is the prevalence of a disease known as 'Yaws', which bears a close resemblance to syphilis. Its infection is common among the more backward of hill tribes, and especially amongst the 'Koyyas' of Malkangiri. The disease is not hereditary and yields to penicillin treatment.

Sarva Seva Sangh organised a squad of 4 doctors assisted by four have earmarked one Range (Ramgiri) for Sarva Seva Sangh for purposes assistants in order to help people out from the rigours of the dreadful disease. These doctors worked in 4 groups in 4 different Police Station Areas — Gudari, Bissam Cuttack, Ambodala and Narayan Patna. They were working under the able guidance of Dr. R. V. Wardekar of Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.

The following figures from Gramdan villages in Narayan Patna area show that the incidence was about 12.8%.

No. of villages	Families	Population	No. of cases
30	1,163	5,629	726

The PAM, which has proved to be an effective medicine everywhere was being injected. Work of these doctors continued till Government of Orissa undertook to operate in the same area in co-operation with WHO. Sarva Seva Sangh, then, decided to withdraw from the field, and in September 1957 they disbanded this service. During the course of 14 months of operation of this scheme, the project incurred an expenditure of Rs. 7,289. Nearly 22,069 cases were examined, of which 12,810 were affected with Yaws. Of the 12 thousand initially checked, 415 received full treatment.

### 2. *Legal Aid :*

Mention has been made in Annexure A (Vol. II) to the provision of various legal measures enacted to protect the interests of Adivasis, and to how they were falling short of expectations in delivering the goods. Right from the beginning of their work in Koraput, Sarva Seva Sangh experienced the necessity of providing legal advice and, in many cases, free legal aid to the villagers in Gramdan villages. It was seen that the

people whose interests were supposed to be guarded, did not even know that any such legislation existed whereby they could get protection against undue harrassment. Neither did they seem to believe that there was any official or non-official who is out to sincerely help them. Ironically enough, their Friend, Philosopher and Guide was the very person who was cause of the utter ruination of their life—the Sahukar. They had neither the capacity nor the means to approach the authority, judicial or executive, to seek redress. Hardly ever have they appeared before Courts of Law as complainants or Plaints. Even for Civil dealings they have faced criminal trials. Complaints, invariably, are so worded that the matter came within the police cognizance. The complainants have hardly to spend anything of their own. Their interests were served at the cost of Public Exchequer.

Importance of providing free legal advice and legal aid was repeatedly stressed on the mind of Government. Even during the course of discussions on co-ordination with Government the Sarva Seva Sangh insisted on including free legal aid and advice as part of N.E.S. work in the area. In the absence of any effective protection on this line, spending of huge amounts in the name of 'Tribal welfare' would hardly make any mark, as far as the genuine welfare of the Adivasi is concerned. His experience of past few generations, has led him to believe that the towns people whether official or non-official, are all kinsmen of money lender, they would always support the Sahukar and would never have any sympathy for him (the Adivasi). As long as, this distrust from his mind was not removed, no extension or welfare work was going to take roots in this community.

Apart from advocating the need for free legal aid, Sarva Seva Sangh on their own organised on a small scale a free 'Legal Aid and Advice Service' with the help of few noble legal practitioners from Koraput. Sangh, also, had the humble services of a retired pleader from U.P. at their disposal. The following table gives an account of the nature of services rendered by the organization.

Some lawyers in the District as well as before the High Court and Board of Revenue had been good enough to offer 'Buddhidan'; as such the expenses have been minimised. The parties concerned had to bear part of the expenses separately.

In fact there should be an officer to see that the laws enacted for the protection of the Adivasi's interests are being properly worked; and he should report cases of their breach to the authorities concerned. Side by side there should be an agency to help and guide them in civil and criminal cases wherever necessary. It should have both officials and non-officials among its members and should first try to get the cases amicably settled outside the court. But when this fails and the matter has to go to court, the committee should provide legal aid at Government cost.

*Particulars of legal aid :*

Sr. No.	Nature of cases	Number	Disposals
1	Civil suits	11	3 decreed against the parties helped by S.S.S. 8 cases still pending.
2	Cases in criminal and Revenue — Courts	35	4 decided against the parties helped by S.S.S. 6 in favour; and 25 cases either have been compromised or withdrawn.
3	Cases in High Court	1	Remanded.
4	Revenue Board	1	Remanded.

Lastly, it may not be out of place to add that the question of selecting the proper personnel for this area is of great importance, and in that connection it would be well for the Government to bear in mind the following words of our Prime Minister :

"We ought to be careful about appointing officers anywhere but we must be doubly so when we appoint them in tribal areas. An officer in the tribal areas should not merely be a man who has passed an examination or gained experience of the routine-work. He must be a man with enthusiasm, whose mind, and even more so whose heart understands the problem. He must not get there just to sit in an office for a few hours a day, and for the rest, curse his fate at being sent to an out of the way place. That type of man is completely useless. It is far better to send a totally uneducated man who has passed no examination, so long as he goes to these people with friendship and affection and lives as one of them. Such a man will produce better results than the brilliant intellectual who has no human understanding of the problem."

Unless something tangible is done in this direction, it is doubtful what part of benefits accruing out of the developmental activities carried on by official or by non-official agencies, will be utilized by the Adivasis and what part by their exploiters. It may just be like putting money in a bottomless pit.

It is a welcome sign that the Government of Orissa were pleased to appoint a committee in November 1957 to enquire into the working of the Acts and other similar legislative enactments and to suggest measures for their better enforcement in the district of Koraput. A representative of the Sarva Seva Sangh was also nominated by the Government as a member of the Committee. The Committee submitted their report in June, 1958 but it is not known what action, if any, has so far been taken thereon,

The question of providing legal aid to the Adivasis seems to have been engaging the attention of the Union Government for some time past. About a year ago, it was stated on their behalf in the Lok-Sabha that they would contribute 50% of the expenses to any State which would like to render legal Aid to Adivasis. Only about a month ago there was a news item stating that the Bihar Government have undertaken this job. Legal aid is also being provided to the Harijans in several States. If there is any class of people whose claim deserves top priority for free legal advice and aid from the Government, it is the Adivasis of Koraput.

## *Chapter XII*

### **RESEARCH AND SPECIAL STUDIES**

#### *1. Exploitation of Forest and Mineral Wealth:*

Koraput abounds in forest wealth. It is a well known fact that produce collected from the Adivasi is sold in outside markets at prices ranging from three-fold to four or five-fold. His share in timber exploitation has been hardly 6% of the prevalent market price.

There were certain Gramdan pockets where either because of paucity of good agricultural lands and other agricultural facilities like irrigation; or because of the menace of wild animals, agriculture was forced to a subsidiary status. This did not mean that Forest industries were bearing sufficient income for the Adivasis. Exploitation at the hands of middleman, and the absence of processing industries of raw materials available so copiously in this tract were telling badly upon Adivasi economy.

Collection and marketing of the raw materials through Forest-labour co-operatives was one aspect of the programme proposed for exploitation of forest wealth. The other aspect of processing certain materials on commercial scale for the benefit of Adivasi had also engaged attention of Sarva Seva Sangh right from the inception of the work.

#### *Chemical Laboratory :*

A modest beginning was made in the year 1956, by establishing a 'Forest Resource Laboratory', with equipments worth Rs. 6,850/-. During 1957-58 further equipment worth Rs. 10,000 was added; and systematic investigations conducted in determining the chemical composition of various soils, analysis of minerals and forest products. A study of essential oil bearing grasses and other vegetable plants was undertaken and accordingly a steam distillation still was set up. In 1958-59 additional equipment worth Rs. 8,000/- was brought in and services of a new consulting chemical Engineer were made available on full-time basis. Today the laboratory is equipped for analysis of minerals, soils and plant products.

#### *Exploratory work :*

A systematic study was undertaken to ascertain the occurrence, extent of availability and possible means of collection and exploitation of mineral and forest resources. Over 20 localities abounding in mineral limestones of interest to cement manufacture have been studied and assayed. Large occurrences of other minerals have been also discovered among which may be mentioned steatite or soapstone which is in great

demand as refractory material in the paper industry. Numerous deposits of ochres have been found suitable for the manufacture of paints and also for use in the indigenous process of iron smelting practised on a large scale by the Adivasi population.

A study of the forest products of the region has revealed even greater possibilities. Myrobalams are being exported from this area to the tune of Rs. 10 lakhs every year and given more attractive prices, the collection could be doubled adding a considerable sum to India's foreign exchange and improving Adivasi economy as no other single item of welfare work can.

Tamarind is the next important item of forest wealth. The seed is allowed to waste in enormous quantities and has been studied with a view to its commercial utilization. Marking nuts constitute another potential source of wealth, although at present hardly known as an industrial raw material. Other forest products studied are various kinds of tan barks, oil seeds, amla, beedi leaves, broomsticks, *Nux Vomica*.

The manufacture of charcoal is a typical Adivasi industry offering tremendous scope for their native acumen; studies were undertaken to devise possibilities of setting up a wood distillation industry on a large scale for commercial marketing and of utilization of the resulting tar as preservative in wood impregnation.

#### *Research on New Processes :*

A new process has been devised for removing the brown skin (pericarp or 'testa') from tamarind seed; and grinding the white kernel to a fine powder yields a useful sizing material for textile and jute industries. The oil from marking nuts has been studied and a simple and elegant process devised for preparing baking enamels for the bicycle and allied industries. This process has been patented for the benefit of the Adivasis on whose behalf it is proposed to set up an industry for the manufacture and sale of modern stoving enamels for the bicycle and automobile industries.

A special study was undertaken to ascertain the principles and problems connected with the indigenous Adivasi process of iron smelting whereby a family, today, with the crudest of equipment, processes iron ores of the locality and produces 5-6 pounds of commercial steel within a matter of 2 hours and markets the resulting product in the weekly shandy. The principal drawback of this process is the poor efficiency of extraction,—only 10-15% of the iron content of the ore being recovered as steel while the bulk of iron goes as waste into the slag. New processes are being devised whereby the ore could be reduced to iron to the extent of 80-90% by simple heating in a closed earthenware pot in admixture with wood waste or other carbonaceous material. The ore pre-treated in this manner is expected to improve the yield of steel in the indigenous process and offer a process of fair efficiency.

### *Work on Manufacturing Schedules :*

Process and manufacturing schedules have been prepared covering 2 principal industries for large scale exploitation, cement manufacture and manufacture of tannin extracts from Myrobalans. Schedules have been also prepared for a paint industry. The Myrobalan extract industry which the Orissa Government have agreed to finance to the extent of Rs. 5 lakhs in the first stage is expected to improve the yield by way of economic return to the Adivasis from Re. 1 per maund to Rs. 8. A project report is available on this industry. The setting up of a paint industry is also under active consideration by the Orissa Government and an industry will be established in the near future as a pilot project of the Government in the Rayagada area. Pilot plants are being set up for the manufacture of stoving enamels from marking nut oil and for the preparation of textile sizing material from tamarind seeds.

### *Timber Fabrication :*

An ASCU timber treatment plant was established to popularize wood preservation techniques. Seasoning also was introduced as part of timber fabrication programme undertaken by Sarva Seva Sangh with a view to popularizing the use of timber in construction industry. Designs of new types of Bow-string and Triangular type, light and elegant trusses were introduced in the construction programme undertaken by Sarva Seva Sangh, and services were offered to public authorities to meet their needs of wide span-trusses.

The programme of investigations for the year 1959-60 is given below. Items on which work is in progress are marked with an asterisk\*.

### *Programme for Next Year :*

- 1.\* Smelting of iron ores into usable steel on a village industry basis. The work conducted during the last year indicated that the yield of steel by the Adivasi process could be nearly doubled by preliminary treatment of the ore. Further improvements are being explored with a view to make the process hold its own as a general commercial proposition.
- 2.\* Beneficiation of manganese ores. A village process has been developed for upgrading manganese ores so as to nearly double the export values. A pilot plant is being installed for the purpose.
- 3.\* The application of local limestones for the manufacture of soda ash and cement on small scale industry basis.
- 4.\* Preparation of stoving enamel from marking nut oil. The conditions for commercial manufacture and application have been standardized and a pilot plant is being installed.
- 5.\* Production of tamarind seed starch on pilot scale.
6. Investigation of local steatites as refractories in the paper industry and for insulators for high temperature duty.

7. Investigation of local kaolins for commercial purposes including manufacture of ceramic wares.
8. Industrial uses of sal seed oil.
9. Experimental wood distillation still for byproduct recovery. The problem has an important bearing on the marketing of sal wood sleepers for Indian Railways which are at present imported in considerable quantities from abroad owing to the lack of creosoting units in India.
10. Experimental model houses for the Adivasis with flooring and roof of terracotta tiles which they could manufacture for themselves and with simplified wooden framework and shutters also within their limited skill.

## Appendix

### RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE

#### 1. Receipts :

The Sarva Seva Sangh received an amount of Rs. 25,30,156 towards expenses in Gramdan areas, upto 30th June, 1959, from various sources. During the same period a loan amount of Rs. 8,31,014 also, was received from Khadi and Village Industries Commission and other agencies. Details of these receipts are given in the following table.

TABLE No. 1.

Statement showing particulars of Receipts as on 30th June, 1959.

Particulars of Receipts	Receipts other than loan		Loan
	1	2	
Gandhi Smarak Nidhi	6,62,000	—	—
A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh	1,30,000	3,18,000*	—
A. I. Khadi Commission	5,64,850	4,31,750	—
Govt. of India	9,42,000	—	—
Govt. of Orissa	1,55,707	—	—
Donations	49,783	—	—
Other Misc. Receipts and Deposits	25,816	81,264	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,30,156</b>	<b>8,31,014</b>	

\* Unadjusted advance from the Central Office.

#### 2. Expenditure :

(a) *Gandhi Smarak Nidhi* : A grant of Rs. 3,00,000 was sanctioned by the Nidhi during the year 1955-56. A further grant of Rs. 3,20,000 was sanctioned during 1957-58; and of Rs. 42,000 in '58-'59. As against these receipts, the Sangh has sanctioned Rs. 1,50,000 and has advanced an amount of Rs. 3,18,000 towards meeting unbudgeted expenditure. Funds received from both these sources were utilized to meet expenditure on administrative charges and training and research activities. Excess expenditure incurred on any item or expenditure on items, for which no other provision was available was always charged to S. S. S. funds. Hence Receipts and Expenditure accounts of the S. S. S. have always been *Ad hoc* in nature.

(b) *Khadi and Village Industries Commission* : An amount of Rs. 5,64,850 was received from the Commission upto 30th June, 1959 under various schemes operated either under the Intensive Development Area Programme or otherwise. During the same period loan amounting to Rs. 4,31,750 was received. The following table gives particulars of receipts and expenditure under different items of industries.

TABLE No. 2.

Statement showing amount received and spent from Khadi and Village Industries Commission upto — 30th June, 1958.

Receipts upto-date Other than loan	Head of expenditure	Total expenditure Other than loan
1	2	3
31,550	20,250	Leather Industry 32,080
48,000	72,000	Village Oil Industry 22,849
12,300	20,500	Soap Industry 4,968
24,000	9,000	Lac and Fibre Industry 14,159
36,000	—	Pottery Industry 7,901
2,000	10,000	Gur Industry —
66,000	—	Khadi Promotion Scheme 14,371
60,000	30,000	Khadi Godown 12,800
60,000	30,000	V. I. Godowns 36,954
54,000	—	Community Work-sheds and equipment for production centre —
1,71,000	—	Salary and Contingencies 1,95,392
—	2,40,000	Loan for Stocking Paddy and Oil Seeds —
—	—	Sarjanam Karyalaya 24,863
5,64,850	4,31,750	Total 3,66,337

*Note* :—Out of a total sum of Rs. 4,31,750 obtained on loan from Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Bombay, Rs. 45,050 was repaid during 1956-57. The Sangh has, also, repaid Rs. 1,21,100, during the year 1957-58, thus leaving an outstanding balance of Rs. 2,65,600 at the end of 1957-58. In the subsequent year another instalment of Rs. 1,14,600 was repaid, leaving total outstanding balance of Rs. 1,51,000 at the end of 30th June, 1959. Expenditure figures till the end of June, 1958 were readily available at the time of writing this Report. It is regretted that up-to-date expenditure figures could not be incorporated.

(c) *Union Government Grants* : The Sangh received so far Rs. 13,92,000 from the Union Govt. of which Rs. 4,50,000 have been refunded as unspent balance during 1958. Thus the amount available for expenditure under various heads from this source was Rs. 9,42,000, against which an amount of Rs. 8,10,180/- has been spent till 30th June, 1959 as shown in the Table No. 3.

TABLE No. 3.

Statement showing particulars of Receipts and payment of Central Govt. Grants.

Receipts	Head of Expenditure	Expenditure incurred upto 30th June 1959
3,02,000	Minor Irrigation	79,408
1,40,000	Soil Conservation and Land Reclamation	48,246
2,05,000	Distribution of Bullock-pairs	1,57,952
50,000	Cattle Breeding Centre	55,039
20,000	Housing Subsidy	33,464
55,000	Training Camp expenses	40,415
60,000	Health, Hygiene and Sanitation	21,851
1,70,000	Demonstration Farming	49,051
2,40,000	Manufacture of Agri. Tools and Research and Training	1,82,776
15,000	Reading Materials	2,492
1,35,000	Non-recurring Capital Expenditure	1,15,201
13,92,000	Total	7,85,995
Plus reappropriation on other heads as per 1958-59 budget proposals		24,188
Grand Total		8,10,183

(d) *Govt. of Orissa* : In the year 1955-56 and later on in 1956-57 an amount of Rs. 1,55,707 was received from Tribal Welfare and Development Departments towards specific welfare projects. As against these receipts Sangh has spent Rs. 1,83,266 so far, with an excess expenditure of Rs. 27,559 which shall be reimbursed from Khadi and V. I. Commission, as modification in original designs of buildings was deemed necessary to fit in with Village Industries Programmes.

TABLE No. 4.

## Statement showing Receipts and Payments of Funds received from Govt. of Orissa.

Receipts	Head of Expenditure	Actual expenditure upto 30th June 1959
1	2	3
18,750	Wells (for drinking water)	18,847
22,500	Minor irrigation	24,205
35,877	Bullock Distribution	35,877
5,625	Housing Subsidy	5,625
66,900	Gandhi Ghar Construction	96,251
4,125	Village approach roads	2,461
1,930	Paddy husking	—
1,55,707	Total	1,83,266

The Sangh has not received any grants from either Union Government or Govt. of Orissa during 1958-59. Future programme of work will be conducted under three Intensive Development Area Schemes now in operation in Koraput. One of these three Areas will operate as a 'Pilot Project for Antyodaya' in Boipariguda area where an expenditure of Rs. 32,00,000 spread over a period of 7 years is planned.

Table No. 5 gives a consolidated account of Expenditure irrespective of sources of Finance.

TABLE No. 5.

## Consolidated account of Expenditure as incurred in Gramdan Areas of Orissa upto 30th June, 1959.

Sr. No.	Head of Expenditure	Actual expenditure incurred upto 30th June 1959 Other than loans
1	2	3
1	Establishment	5,73,587
2	Grant-in-aid to Village and other Institutions	89,613
3	Crop loans now in circulation (to be recovered); and advances to be adjusted in susequent year as on 30th June, 1958	3,81,485
4	Transport (Capital)	1,15,201

1	2	3
<b>5</b>	<b>Development Expenses :</b>	
(a)	Minor Irrigation	1,03,613
(b)	Soil Conservation	48,246
(c)	Community Houses (Gandhi Ghars.)	96,251
(d)	Housing Subsidy	39,081
(e)	Village Industries	3,76,364
(f)	Bullock Distribution	1,93,829
(g)	Drinking Water Wells	18,847
(h)	Village Roads	2,461
(i)	Demonstration Farming and Distribution of Seeds and Manure and Agri. Implements	49,051
(j)	Cattle breeding Centre	55,039
(k)	Publicity and Reading materials for Adivasis	2,492
(l)	Health Hygiene and Sanitation	21,851
<b>6</b>	<b>Research and Training inclusive of Training Camps</b>	<b>1,82,776</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Training Camps for Adivasis</b>	<b>40,515</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,90,302</b>

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